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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine under what conditions 14 recent Mexican immigrant high school students thought they used and acquired English as a Second Language (ESL) in an "English Only" high school in California. Each of the 14 students was interviewed at least twice and "shadowed" for 2 days in school. Follow-up interviews and observations provided verification, correction, and clarification of self-reports. Interviewees' insights were compared to those obtained from teachers, counselors, and administrators. In a school with 49% Hispanic and 24% limited English proficient (LEP) populations, students explained that their major linguistic problems were based on a lack of opportunities to understand and use English for social and academic purposes both in and out of the classroom. Student suggestions for the improvement of English language learning are presented and discussed. Six appendixes contain an introductory letter to teachers, a student questionnaire, a language log form, a parent and student participation agreement, a follow-up note to teachers, and a sample page of a coded interview. (Contains 142 references.) (MDM)

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RECENT MEXICAN IMMIGRANT STUDENTS' OPINIONS OF THEIR USE AND ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN AN "ENGLISH-ONLY" AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL:

A QUALITATIVE STUDY

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by

ROSALIE GIACCHINO-BAKER

A Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of
The Claremont Graduate School in partial fulfillment
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
Graduate Faculty of Education.

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We, the undersigned, certify that we have read this dissertation and approve it as adequate in scope and quality for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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Abstract of the Dissertation

RECENT MEXICAN IMMIGRANT STUDENTS' OPINIONS OF THEIR USE AND ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN AN "ENGLISH-ONLY" AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL: A QUALITATIVE STUDY

By

Rosalie Giacchino-Baker

The Claremont Graduate School: 1992

Although learners are the key to understanding any teaching and learning situation, their voices are not often heard. The goal of this qualitative study was to determine under what conditions fourteen recent Mexican immigrant students think they use and acquire English as a second language in an "English-only" high school in California.

Research methodology included 34 taped, semi-structured interviews; 30 days (175 hours) of participant observations in classrooms with 40 different teachers; and 75 hours of out-of-class participant observations during 62 visits to the research site over a one-year period. Each of the fourteen principal co-researchers was interviewed at least twice and "shadowed" for two days at school. Follow-up interviews provided verification, correction, and clarification of prior interviews. Interviewees' insights were compared to those obtained from teachers, counselors, on-site and district administrators. Fieldnotes and interview transcripts were analyzed through the constant comparative method of data analysis.

Four themes emerged from the data: What Students Say About Themselves as Language Learners; What Students Say About Their Current Use of English; What Students Say About the Educational and Institutional Factors That Affect Their Use and Acquisition of English; and Students' Suggestions for Improving the Acquisition and Teaching of English.

The Hispanic high-school drop-out rate is highest among minority groups in the U.S.. Participants in this study, aged 14 to 18, were selected as having the greatest

likelihood of success in an American school since their teachers recommended them on the basis of demonstrated motivation, and all were literate in Spanish, having completed at least six years of schooling in Mexico.

In a school with 49% Hispanic and 24% Limited English Proficient (LEP) populations, students explained that their major linguistic problems were based on a lack of opportunities to understand and use English for social and academic purposes both in and out of the classroom. Students described the following educational factors as contributing to language difficulties: inappropriate class placements, curricular issues, and teachers' methodologies and expectations. They expressed an urgent need for curricular and extracurricular support that valued them, their language, and culture as part of the school community.

DEDICATION

Dedicated with love and gratitude
to my husband, Fred,
to my children, John, Michael, and Sarah,
to my immigrant parents, Rosaria Lamela and Carmelo Giacchino,
to my sisters and "brothers,"
Mary, John, Jean, Jo, and Matt.

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I appreciate the friendship and help of the many colleagues at The Claremont Graduate School who laughed and cried with me through this process. Gloria Martin was a careful and conscientious auditor who carried my data with her on vacation. Penny Oldfather helped bring order to my ideas during the early morning hours.

I was lucky to have been part of a dissertation support group whose interest in semiotics was a wonderful excuse to show each other that we cared about each other's professional and personal growth. My thanks to Nancy Pine, Elizabeth Campbell, LeRae Phillips, John Eichinger, Pam Wiley, Nick Cook, Greta Nagel, and Laurel Wilson Pamson. Kathy Weed and Joe Stephenson, also in our group, deserve special thanks since they spent hours helping me to revise and edit an unwieldy first draft. Kathy made thoughtful suggestions from a linguist's perspective, Joe from a qualitative researcher's point of view.

I am grateful to the students and staff at "Capital High" and its school district for welcoming me into their classrooms and offices. My special thanks go to my fourteen student co-researchers who were so generous with their time and open with their thoughts.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY 1

Purpose and Rationale 1

Description of the Study 3

Organization of the Report 4

Chapter 2: A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 6

Theoretical Assumptions 6

Literature Related to ESL Students in High Schools 8

School Reform and Effective Schools Studies 9

Cultural/Ecological Studies 15

Literature Related to Second Language Acquisition 20

Second Language Acquisition Theories 20

Theories of Bilingual Cognitive Development 27

Literature Related to the Role of English in Multicultural Educaction 33

General Historical Perspectives 34

Mexican Perspectives 36

Cultural/Ecological Perspectives 39

Legal Considerations 46

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY 50

A Rationale for the Use of Qualitative Research 50

A General Description of Qualitative Research 52

A Description of the Research Methodology Used in This Study 55

The Research Site and Community 55

The Research Site's Programs for Language-Minority Students ... 57

CHAPTER 3: (continued)

The Pilot Studies: Initial Entry into the Research Site................60
The Current Study: Continued Entry into the Research Site........62
    Selection of Participants..70
    Data Collection..79
    Data Analysis..82
    Feedback to Co-Researchers and School Staff..............84
Summary Timeline for the Study..85
Format of the Report of the Findings..87
Summary of the Findings...88
CHAPTER 4: VERBAL PORTRAITS OF CO-RESEARCHERS............................95
CHAPTER 5: THE REPORT OF THE FINDINGS--THEME 1: WHAT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THEMSELVES AS ENGLISH LEARNERS...............111
General English Language Background and Proficiency...................113
Reasons for Learning English..116
Progress and Problems with English...124
Learning Strategies...141
Discussion of Theme 1..152
CHAPTER 6: THE REPORT OF THE FINDINGS--THEME 2: WHAT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THEIR CURRENT USE OF ENGLISH....................161
Students' Use of English in the Community................................164
Students' Use of English at Work...167
Students' Use of English at Home..169
Students' Use of English at School 174
Discussion of Theme 2..204

CHAPTER 7: THE REPORT OF THE FINDINGS--THEME 3: WHAT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT EDUCATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT THEIR USE AND ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH 211
Inappropriate Class Placements....213
Students' Curricular Concerns....218
Students' Opinions of Teachers' Input and Methodologies....223
Students' Opinions of Teachers' Expectations....233
Discussion of Theme 3....247
CHAPTER 8: THE REPORT OF THE FINDINGS--THEME 4: STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING--EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS...256
Suggestions for Self-Improvement....258
Advice for New Immigrant Students....262

Suggestions for Teachers....266
Suggestions for the School....273
CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSION: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY....279
Summary....279
    The Learners....280
    The Learners' Use of English....281
    Educational and Institutional Factors That Affect the Learners' Use and Acquisition of English....282
    Students' Suggestions for Improving English Language Acquisition and Teaching....283
    The Role of English in an "English-Only" High School....284
The Limits of the Study....285

CHAPTER 9: (continued)

Recommendations for Future Research........285
GLOSSARY OF TERMS........287
REFERENCES........290

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1

The Role of the Socio-Affective Filter in Second Language Acquisition.....................21

Figure 2

The Range of Contextual Support and Degree of Cognitive Involvement in Communicative Activities..29

Figure 3

The "Dual-Iceberg" Representation of Bilingual Proficiency.................................31

Figure 4

Class Placement Guidelines at Capital High..59

Figure 5

Summary of Biographical Data for Co-Researchers in ESL 1 and ESL 2 Classes..........76

Figure 6

Summary of Biographical Data for Co-Researchers in ESL 3 and "Post-ESL" Classes....77

Figure 7

Courses Taken by Co-Researchers at the Time of the Interviewees...........................78

Figure 8

Timeline for the Study in Chart Form...86

Figure 9

Summary of Themes, Sub-themes, Categories, and Properties...............................89

Figure 10

Summary of the Findings in Theme 1: What Immigrant Students Say About Themselves as Learners of English as a Second Language..112

Figure 11

Summary of the Findings in Theme 2: What Students Say About Their Current Use of English..162

Figure 12

Summary of the Findings in Theme 3: What Immigrant Students Say About Educational and Institutional Factors That Affect Their Use and Acquisition of English............... 212

Figure 13

Summary of the Findings in Theme 4: Immigrant Students' Suggestions for Improving English Language Learning and Teaching..256

Figure 14

The Roles of First and Second Language Input in Second Language Acquisition........271

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Introductory Letter to Teachers....................304
Appendix B: Student Questionnaire....................306
Appendix C: Form for Students' Language Log....................308
Appendix D: Parent and Student Participation Agreement....................310
Appendix E: Follow-Up Note to Teachers....................312
Appendix F: Sample Page of a Coded Interview....................315

Chapter 1

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

> And there was a myth, a pervasive myth to the effect that if we only learned to speak English well--and particularly without an accent--we would be welcomed into the American fellowship...the true text was not our speech, but rather our names and our appearance, for we would always have an accent, however perfect our pronunciation, however excellent our enunciation, however divine our diction. That accent would be heard in our pigmentation, our physiognomy, our names. We were, in short, the other. (Madrid, 1988, p.2)

Purpose and Rationale

Although learners are the key to understanding any teaching and learning situation, their voices are often not heard. We test English-as-a-second-language (ESL) students, grade them, label them, and track them based on their proficiency in English. We have not asked them how they try to use English to survive and learn on secondary school campuses. The goal of this study was to determine under what conditions fourteen present or former ESL students, all Mexican immigrants, say that they use and acquire English in an "English-only" American high school.

Our secondary school classrooms are increasingly filled with students who immigrate to the United States as adolescents. Even though many of them have been educated in their first languages, they find their linguistic and educational achievements, as well as cultural identities, are negated as they begin the long path to learning English. They are labelled Limited English Proficient (LEP) thereby proclaiming them deficient rather than encouraging their status as aspiring bilinguals.

Common practice in many California high schools is to place them in programs which stress competence in English as a second language as a prerequisite for most academic coursework. Since it can take from five to seven years for an older learner to develop academic proficiency in a second language (Cummins, 1981; Krashen, Scarcella, & Long, 1982), students who have been educated in their first languages are often denied the opportunity of developing cognitively at a pace with their English-speaking classmates. Some respond to the challenge by exceeding all expectations. Many become complacent about coursework and accept the lowered goals of a tracking system that keeps them in less-demanding classes. Others leave school.

Statistics give a stark but depersonalized view of what happens to Latino students in the American educational system. According to the American Council on Education's Ninth annual status report on minorities in higher education released in January 1991, the number of Latino students finishing high school dropped from 60.1% in 1984 to 55.9% in 1989. By comparison, the number of Anglos getting their diplomas that year dropped slightly to 82.1%, while African-Americans showed a small gain at 76.1%. Even those Latinos who finish high school are often unable to get into four-year colleges because of their inadequate academic backgrounds and their inability to communicate in standard English. About 56% of all Latinos in higher education are enrolled in community colleges where entrance requirements do not exclude students on the basis of academic coursework or proficiency in English.

Only 16.1% of Latinos entered college in 1989 compared to 31.8% of Anglos and 23.5% of African-Americans. In 1976 Latinos accounted for only 2% of college graduates; by 1989 the rate rose to only 3% even though the number of Latino college-age students had doubled. This situation is even worse among Mexican Americans, the largest group of Latinos in the U.S., who showed no gains in college completion rates during the same period.

Recent research has attempted to recognize the great diversity among groups labelled Hispanic for purposes of bureaucratic convenience. Central American refugees and Cuban Americans have been described as more successful in school settings than Puerto Ricans and Mexican Americans (Suarez-Orozco, 1989; Trueba, 1989). Recent Mexican immigrants have been found to function differently than Mexican Americans who have spent longer in this country (Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Suarez-Orozco, 1987, 1989). This study continues in the tradition of rejecting stereotypes and recognizing differences as well as similarities among Spanish-speaking students, in this case, Mexican immigrants.

Even though proficiency in English is logically viewed as a key to removing educational and economic ceilings currently placed on many ethnic and racial groups in our society, there has been no research to date that has presented and analyzed linguistic realities from the perspective of "teenage" Mexican newcomers.

Description of the Study

My study examined the linguistic and educational realities of fourteen recently arrived adolescent immigrants from Mexico. All of them, except one, arrived in the United States and began their American education at the high school level. Four students in ESL 1 classes, three students in ESL 2 classes, and three students in ESL 3 classes participated as co-researchers. Four former ESL students, one in each of the four tracks of the regular English program, also acted as co-researchers.

Using a variety of qualitative research techniques, I recorded and analyzed these fourteen students' accumulated reports of how they used and acquired English. Through semi-structured interviews, I asked these Mexican students to describe their formal and informal language experiences, their help-seeking strategies, and their progress and problems in a multilingual, multicultural educational setting. Students kept logs of when and with whom they spoke English. I was a participant observer of their classes, between-class breaks, pep rallies, lunch hours, and after-school activities, including sports events and Regional Occupational Program training. I asked them, as co-researchers, to validate findings and make suggestions for improvement in their learning environments. I compared their insights with those obtained from teachers, counselors, teachers' aides, as well as on-site and district administrators. The findings of this study reflect the realities experienced by fourteen unique individuals, but I hope they will become part of a dialogic process that values students' opinions in the planning, implementing, and assessing of future educational programs. As stated by Trueba (1987), "the ultimate test of microethnography as a useful research tool in educational research will be its capacity to impact the reality and the quality of the educational process" (p.v).

Organization of the Report

The report of this study begins in Chapter 2 with a statement of the theoretical assumptions upon which this research is based. Following is a review of the literature that examines three interwoven areas of inquiry: 1) ESL students in secondary schools; 2) second language acquisition theories; and 3) the role of language in multicultural education. All three of these areas have been discussed in relation to the goal of this study, the use and acquisition of English by recent Mexican immigrants in an "English-only" high school.

An English-only high school is defined as one where academic instruction is offered only in English, except for foreign language classes. Some of these high schools, such as the research site for this study, provide linguistic support for language minority students through ESL classes and/or sheltered content instruction (academic classes using modified English, experiential and collaborative strategies, and visual input).

Chapter 3 presents a brief rationale for the use of qualitative methodology, as well as a detailed description of its implementation in this study. My fourteen co-researchers are described through verbal portraits in Chapter 4.

Findings of the study have been reported and discussed in the light of current research, based on the four major themes that emerged from the data. Each theme is presented and analyzed in a separate chapter: Chapter 5: What immigrant students say about themselves as learners of English; Chapter 6: What immigrant students say about their current use of English; Chapter 7: What immigrant students say about educational and institutional factors that affect their acquisition and use of English; Chapter 8: Students' suggestions for improving the learning and teaching of English as a second language. Chapter 8 also includes educational implications of students' suggestions.

The importance and limitations of this study, as well as recommendations for further research are included in Chapter 9.

Appendices include the following: A) the introductory letter to participating teachers; B) the student questionnaire; C) the form for students' language logs; D) the parent and student participation agreement; E) the follow-up note to teachers; and E) a sample page of a coded interview.

Chapter 2

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This review of relevant literature is prefaced by a statement of the theoretical assumptions underlying the study. Following is a review of the literature that examines three interconnected areas of inquiry: 1) ESL students in secondary schools; 2) second language acquisition theories; and 3) the role of language in multicultural education. Secondary school research includes recent studies based on school reform and effective schools models, as well as psycho-social studies analyzing students' motivation and achievement. Second language acquisition research includes theories of bilingual cognitive development. The literature on the role of language in multicultural education has been examined from a general historical perspective, from a historical perspective with a focus on Mexican issues, and from a cultural/ecological perspective. Legal mandates have also been examined as policy issues in multicultural education.

Theoretical Assumptions

As stated by Greene (1990), "our viewing of what surrounds us is always perspectival, from the place of our particular location in the world" (p.69). This study was conducted from a position of "non-neutrality" in three areas of vital importance to second language learning, teaching, and research. They are as follows.

First, language is not neutral. Cultural identity is imbedded in language and transmitted to each new generation through language which serves as a key boundary marking mechanism in determining group membership. Children learn much more than sounds (phonetics), word meanings (semantics), and proper word order (syntax) from their parents. They learn a way of looking at the world that is partly defined by their group's language habits. If a person's language is negated as unimportant, self esteem and cultural validity are also questioned. Students who study English as a second language have a right to have both their languages and cultures validated. A dominant culture has no right to impose its world views through its language. Standard English is necessary as a tool not because it is better or more beautiful than students' first languages or dialects but because language minority students need the power they get from commanding the language of the dominant class.

Peirce (1989) argued in favor of transforming the goals of teaching English as an international language:

> The teaching of English can be reconceptualized as a pedagogy that opens up possibilities for students and teachers of English, not only in terms of material advancement, but in terms of the way they perceive themselves, their role in society, and the potential for change in their society. (p. 403)

These goals are equally applicable for use in the United States where the question of competence in English is only the first step in meeting the demands of a truly multicultural, multilingual society.

Second, teaching is not neutral. As stated by Paulo Freire in Shor (1987), it is either naïve or clever to think "of school as merely a kind of parenthesis whose essential structure was immune to the influences of social class, of gender, or of race" (p.211). "There is no such thing as a category called 'professional' competence all by itself. We must always ask ourselves: In favor of whom and of what do we use our technical competence" (p. 212). Teachers have a responsibility to help all students be critical and creative in their approach to learning. Teachers must reflect on what they do so that theory and practice can be combined through praxis (Freire, 1987). Education is not the sole cause of societal problems, but it can help to solve them through a commitment to critical teaching and inquiry.

Research, therefore, is the third area of "non-neutrality" upon which this study is based. Research on minority education must address the historical, cultural, and political contexts of a multicultural society. It must also examine the educational realities that shapes the lives of minorities today. Researchers must be committed to ensuring equal access to power through education, as explained by Roman and Apple (1990):

> We see educational inquiry as an ethical and political act that is strongly connected to conflicts over knowledge, resources, and power outside as well as inside of education even when its practitioners wish otherwise. (p. 42)

The ethical, if not political, portion of this position is espoused by many researchers who are concerned about the uses to which their findings are put. Spradley (1979) gave this version of the spaceship earth metaphor to describe human vulnerability and responsibilities:

> This vulnerability makes our responsibility clear if not easy. To ignore this weightlessness on fellow astronauts while the spaceship runs out of oxygen, exhausts its fuel supply, and the crew verges on mutiny.(p.13)

According to Hymes (1981), "of all forms of scientific knowledge, ethnography is the most open, the most compatible with a democratic way of life, the least likely to produce a world in which experts control knowledge at the expense of those who are studied" (p.57).

From this perspective of "non-neutrality" in the areas of language, teaching, and research, therefore, a review of relevant literature will follow.

Literature Related to ESL Students in Secondary Schools

There is only a small body of research that analyzes the challenges facing language minority (LM) and limited English proficient (LEP) students, teachers, and schools at the secondary level. According to the California State Department of Education's Language census report for California public schools, 1989, seventy-five percent of the identified limited English proficient students in California schools spoke Spanish as their primary language; seventy-two percent of the Spanish LEP students were enrolled in kindergarten through grade six. These elementary school children have been the focus of the most intensive research in bilingual education.

Hakuta and Snow (1986) indicated that this research can be divided into two basic types: evaluation research and basic research. The first of these typically attempts to compare and contrast the linguistic and academic progress of students in bilingual programs with those in programs with ESL pull-out classes. The second type, basic research, analyzes the linguistic, cognitive, or psychosocial development of bilingual children. Evaluation research, including reports as disputed as the one by Baker and de Kanter (1981), has been most influential in determining national and state bilingual policies. Basic research by linguists, sociologists, anthropologists, and psychologists has not received as much attention by policy makers. Naturalistic inquiry whose major strength is providing detailed, contextualized, and holistic analyses has received the least attention, most of it again focused on younger children.

Since data from secondary students is limited, this review of the literature will include research on secondary education where qualitative data from students may represent only a portion of a study's goals and findings.

School Reform and Effective Schools Studies

Some recent studies have evaluated programs for LEP students from school reform or effective schools frameworks. Lucas, Henze, and Donato (1990) conducted a study of Latino secondary students using an effective schools model. Their goal was to determine characteristics of high schools that promoted the success of language minority students and to give specific examples of on-site programs helping to achieve this success.

Using both quantitative and qualitative criteria, they selected six "effective" high schools, five in California and one in Arizona. Each site was visited for a total of three days by a team of two to four researchers who conducted structured interviews of administrators, program directors, teachers, staff, and 135 Latino students. Other data collection methods included student questionnaires, records and document collections, 54 classroom observations, and "serendipitous encounters."

The investigators originally intended to divide the students, all non-native speakers of English, according to four categories: high achievers, average achievers, students who had been doing poorly but who had shown improvement, and students who had immigrated within the last two years. Since the academic distinctions turned out to be unclear, the students, in grades nine through twelve, were grouped only as newcomers and non-newcomers for purposes of analysis. This analysis was accomplished by compiling data from each researcher to form a case study for each school. As explained by the authors of this study, "These six case studies were then analyzed in order to compare perceived realities across these schools...we developed both concrete descriptions of what we observed and categories or themes derived from the data and informed by other studies of effective schooling" (p.322).

The following key features of effective schools were presented as findings: 1) value is placed on the students' languages and cultures; 2) high expectations of language-minority students are made concrete; 3) school leaders make the education of language-minority students a priority; 4) staff development is explicitly designed to help teachers and other staff serve language-minority students more effectively; 5) a variety of courses and programs is offered for language-minority students; and 6) a counseling program gives special attention to language-minority students.

The Lucas et al. study provided an invaluable overview of a long neglected area of research. Even though only a few days were actually spent at each site, teams of researchers stated that they relied mainly on participants' perceptions of their experiences to determine the key features for successful programs for language-minority students. Student interviews were listed as a primary data source, but there were relatively few student quotations used to support the findings. This could be because of the article-length report of the study or because of the structured format of the interviews which was not described in detail. The major findings of the Lucas et al. study, however, form a current basis of comparison for other programs for language minority students in secondary schools.

Through a two-year, on-site study of a Los Angeles area junior high school, Sobul (1984) applied Goodlad's five-point curriculum model--the ideal, the formal, the operational, the instructional, and the experiential--to bilingual education. She determined that there were often areas of incongruity resulting from loose coupling between national legislation, California state guidelines, the Los Angeles County Board of Education directives, site-level hiring and administrative practice, and classroom teachers' methodologies. She gathered information on instructional practices through participant and non-participant observations in four different bilingual U.S. history classes. The experiential portion of her inquiry involved interviews with the administrator, teachers and students. Twelve students were selected as part of her informant pool. Two interviews were conducted after each of the 48 class observations with the goal of getting student reactions to the curriculum and methodology in their classrooms. Even though the four teachers had different language usage patterns and teaching strategies, students had consistently favorable reactions to all four teachers' use of Spanish, teaching methods, and choice of materials. The most critical comment made was by a student who preferred history taught in English. Students' opinions were elicited but were not the goal of this research.

In her recommendations for further study, Sobul stated that there is "an overwhelming urgency for secondary level research in bilingual education. Information is needed about LEP students' successes and failures in English-only programs at the high school and college level" (p. 150).

The most comprehensive research to date dealing with English-as-a second-language issues in "English-only" elementary and secondary schools, was presented in a series of reports written under a contract awarded to the Southwest Regional Educational Laboratory (SWRL) and presented at the 1991 annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association. These reports dealt with various aspects of the Exemplary Special Alternative Instructional Programs (SAIPs) which are identified as "English-only" alternatives to bilingual programs and, as such, are currently funded by Title VII. These reports are based on second-year findings in a three-year research project which included secondary schools in four of the nine sites visited. Of the 46 teachers observed, 12 were in high schools. Qualitative data from structured interviews and informal observations were used to supplement quantitative data collected through formal instruments such as the Description of Instructional Practices (DIP), the Instructional Environment Profile (IEP), and the Student Functional Proficiency Profile (SFP).

This research project specified intensity of English language development (ELD) support and quality of instruction as the two major factors involved in creating and maintaining exemplary SAIPs. Duration, continuity, and comprehensiveness of ELD support were designated as contributing to intensity. Quality of instruction was determined by its integration with effective academic instruction, its modification of the instructional environment that included organization and delivery of instruction, and teacher professionalism and development.

Of the five reports detailing the results of this research to date: Castaneda (1991), Lucas and Katz (1991), Romero (1991), Tikunoff and Ward (1991), and van Broekhuizen (1991); the presentations of Lucas and Katz (1991) and Romero (1991) have the most direct relevance to my study.

The SWRL report by Lucas & Katz (1991) examined students' use of their first languages in exemplary English-only programs. Of the two secondary school districts described, one had a "minority" population of about 50%; the other was predominantly

Anglo. In addition to integrated classes on school sites, the former had a pull-out program called an English Language Institute where ESL students were bussed to a different site for language classes and/ or sheltered content instruction for three hours each day. The latter program for eighth and ninth grade students used content classes as the primary means of language instruction. These classes were taught by content teachers who had received special training in methods of teaching English-as-a-second-language learners.

Lucas and Katz found that "teachers and students literally did not speak the same language" (p. 17). "At the high school level, the contrast between teacher and student talk was most striking: 96.6% of the talk by teachers was all in English compared with 49.7% of the talk by students all in English" (p. 18). This report concluded, however, that teachers and students may not have been communicating in the same languages but that "they were engaged for the majority of classroom time in tasks that encouraged the use of language to develop LEP students' academic competence" (p. 19). Lucas and Katz determined that the students' high rate of first language usage was not based solely on the fact that they spent 28% of their time working in small groups in which meaning, requiring higher level thinking skills, was negotiated in their first languages. Students used their first languages for academic and social purposes because teachers had established learning environments in which these languages were valued.

The SWRL report by Romero (1991) analyzed schools' efforts to integrate English language development with content instruction. The author looked at three levels of support for students' English language development: classroom instruction, school-based support systems that directly affect students, and support systems that indirectly affect students. Findings in the area of primary English language development support were the most clearly defined. They provided details supporting the effectiveness of "an overt language focus throughout the curriculum" (p. 5) and curriculum alignment that included integration with other instructional programs so that LEP students would not be segregated from the mainstream. Romero found that effective teachers in these programs used whole language methodology that included thematic units. She also indicated that effective teachers used specific "active teaching" strategies: 90% of the teachers used visuals or manipulatives; 75% of them used advance organizers (notes or outlines that students could use before and during lessons). Sensitivity to the students' languages and cultures was observed in 91% of the observations, but information relating to students' cultures was incorporated only 35% of the time. The Romero report determined, therefore, that oral language and interaction was more commonly stressed than "the role of culture and cultural knowledge in learning" (p. 12).

An additional study offered great potential but limited details in analyzing the linguistic realities of teenage immigrant students. To obtain data for its publication entitled Crossing the schoolhouse border (Olsen, 1988), California Tomorrow conducted 360 structured, in-depth interviews with immigrant students, aged 11-18, in 33 different communities in California. Students were asked to select from multiple-choice answers but were also encouraged to provide additional information. As listed in the appendix of this publication, questions dealt with many aspects of immigrants' past and present lives. Some were specifically concerned with language education and language use. Although answers were "coded...to facilitate quantitative and multi-variate analysis" and "analyzed in a separate process" (p. 18), no data has been published from these interviews other than the valuable discussions supported by a limited number of enlightening quotations that appear in Crossing the schoolhouse border. Since original transcripts of these interviews are no longer intact, there is no way to tap this potentially rich source of both quantitative and qualitative data relating to immigrants' linguistic experiences (L. Olsen, personal communication, March 20, 1990).

In summary, recent research examining successful programs for language minority students in secondary schools has designated certain characteristics as important. These studies maintained that an overriding factor in all effective programs is a respect for students' languages and cultures. They suggested that English Language Development support must be integrated with academic instruction that is modified to meet the linguistic and cultural needs of ESL students. Effective teaching methodologies included whole language and "active teaching" strategies. Effective programs required the support of school leadership and counseling services, as well as teacher professionalism and development, so that a variety of courses and extracurricular activities could be offered. Effective programs also included regular monitoring of students' language proficiency and academic achievement so that extra support could be continued for as long as needed.

Cultural/Ecological Studies

Two recent studies (Suarez-Orozco, 1989; Matute-Bianchi, 1986) analyzed student motivation and achievement using a cultural/ecological framework and offered insights into the realities of ESL students at the secondary level.

Suarez-Orozco (1989) conducted a year-long, qualitative study of 50 Central American immigrants in two inner-city high schools. His purpose was to analyze their psychosocial motivational patterns which enabled them to endure short-term hardships for long-term goals of "becoming someone" and helping hard-working parents and loved ones they had left behind. He used Ogbu's and DeVos' complementary models of minority status adaptations to explain how his Central American informants functioned as immigrants rather than caste-like minorities such as Mexican Americans.

Suarez-Orozco's methodology included observations in the schools; special interviews with teachers, staff members, parents, and members of a community organization for Central American refugees; and formal interviews on specific topics and thematic apperception testing with his 50 student informants.

Although studying language usage was not the goal of Suarez-Orozco's research, his student-centered analysis portrayed communication problems as among the obstacles to academic achievement. Both counselors and ESL teachers were categorized as ineffective gatekeepers whom students had to learn to circumvent by appealing to sympathetic administrators or more experienced friends. He found that counselors did not understand student backgrounds or goals and that low expectations and inappropriate class placements frustrated students who stated: "I'm not a crab; I don't want to go backwards" (p. 130). ESL classes were described by a teacher as "the school's own inner ghetto" (p. 133) that was overcrowded, ill-equipped, and staffed by teachers with low morale. A typical teacher's statement to this effect was: "They think we can't teach anything else, and that's why we go into bilingual" (p. 134). Suarez-Orozco found that teachers dealt with their helplessness by "routinizing all classroom activities to an absurd point, where teaching often seemed secondary to pedagogically irrelevant tasks" (p. 134) such as spending two weeks watching movies on civil rights as students slept.

Other obstacles to immigrant achievement recorded by Suarez-Orozco were after-school jobs and perceived legal ceilings for future education and employment as illegal immigrants. Students reacted to these legal ceilings in three different ways: applying to professional training programs rather than universities; getting depressed and entering the job market immediately; or manipulating the system to gain entry into a university.

Although some of the themes of Suarez-Orozco's study, such as war, terror, guilt, and dramatic suffering, can be applied only to the refugee situation, he indicated that others were also part of the realities of recent Mexican immigrants. Most of these dealt with day to day school situations and students' reactions to them. For example, he discovered many "patterns of interethnic communication and miscommunication in classrooms, inappropriate classroom assignments and student initiatives to circumvent them" (p.13). He found that these communication problems in classrooms were due to "primary cultural differences" that included language and misinterpretation of authority expectations. He found that immigrants thought silence in the classroom was the epitome of respect, but white teachers interpreted it as passivity. When teachers became angry, students became quieter. These students could not understand what they perceived to be permissiveness and lack of discipline and respect in classrooms. They wanted more directions from teachers and were ready to comply.

Suarez-Orozco stated that the education of teachers in cultural differences may be effective in alleviating communication problems in the classroom, but he warned that there is no evidence that Hispanic teachers do better with Hispanic students than Anglo teachers.

This study vividly described and analyzed students' attempts to maintain ties to self-sacrificing parents, to cultural traditions, and to other Central American immigrants while accommodating to the demands of American culture. He contrasted their struggle with that of Mexican Americans, however, with the assertion that for his informants, educational success was not associated with "acting white" or leaving their group behind. He found that a need for love and closeness and for helping others was primary in their lives.

Also using a cultural/ecological framework that established a connection between status and school achievement (Ogbu, 1983; Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986), Matute-Bianchi (1986) conducted a two-year ethnographic study of ethnic identities and patterns of school successes and failures among Japanese-American students and students of Mexican descent. Her findings were based on campus-wide observations, analysis of school records, teacher interviews, and interviews with 35 Mexican-descent students and 14 Japanese-American students. Students were chosen from a pool of 307 students suggested by school staff as either being successful or unsuccessful. She stated that she was unable to find any unsuccessful students of Japanese ancestry to interview.

Matute-Bianchi gave descriptions of five categories of Mexican-descent students which included brief indications of their language usage patterns, place of birth, style of dress, self-ascripted ethnic identity, perceptions of other Mexican-descent groups, attitudes toward school, and educational goals. The five categories included the following groups: 1) recent-Mexican-immigrant students; 2) Mexican-oriented students; 3) Mexican-American students; 4) Chicanos; and 5) Cholos.

Matute-Bianchi provided descriptions of recent Mexican immigrants who varied in socio-economic backgrounds and proficiency in Spanish, especially literacy skills. She briefly mentioned these recent immigrants' self-ascripted identity as Mexican and the reasons they gave for coming to the United States as increased economic opportunity. According to her analysis, their socio-economic status was directly related to their level of education which, in turn, directly affected their academic experiences in the United States. Matute-Bianchi described recent immigrants through the perceptions of others in the school, but immigrants' perceptions of other groups were not included in her findings. Following is the teachers' description of recent Mexican immigrants:

> Although students in this category [recent immigrants] are not among the most successful Mexican-descent students in the school, they are frequently described by teachers and staff as more courteous, more serious about their schoolwork, more eager to please, more polite, more industrious, morewell behaved, more naïve, and less worldly than other students in the school. (p.237)

She differentiated Mexican-oriented students from recent immigrants by explaining that many of them had been designated as fluent-English-proficient (FEP) and were able to use English successfully in academic classes conducted in English even though their literacy skills varied considerably. Also unlike recent immigrants, they used English and Spanish interchangeably with friends and English with the school staff. Like recent immigrants, however, they often spoke Spanish at home. These Mexican-oriented students described their difficulties in relating to other Mexican-origin groups on the campus stating, for example, that Mexican-American students acted superior to them and made fun of them. These same communication problems extended to Chicanos and Cholos whom Mexican-oriented students felt had lost their culture.

Matute-Bianchi found that school success patterns were based on students' perception of their own status. As described by Matute-Bianchi, Mexican-American students were those born in the U.S. who often spoke little or no Spanish and were described by school staff as being "assimilated." Profiles of successful Mexican-descent students included characteristics of Mexican-oriented and Mexican-American students. The

Chicano group and the Cholos were profiled as those who had internalized their caste-like minority status and, for many reasons, were least likely to be able to follow through on any educational or occupational goals. Her use of the label, Chicano, to denote these characteristics was not, however, consistent with current research in which Chicano and Mexican American are often used interchangeably.

Matute-Bianchi's study continued in the important work of breaking down the myth of the monolithic nature of "Mexican-American culture." As in all qualitative research, the labels and characteristics used by Matute-Bianchi were drawn from specific observations in a specific setting. Her description of a large percentage of Mexican-descent students who are alienated from the American educational system was easily recognizable. Her findings, a valuable addition to grounded theory, demonstrated that "what is more salient to nonwhite minorities in this connection is not their objective material conditions so much as it is their *perception* of themselves and others--and of the value of their investment in education" (p.234). Students who had not internalized a caste-like minority status were found to be more successful academically.

Matute-Bianchi did not discuss, however, the conditions which promote students' valuing educational goals. She did not explore how or why recent immigrants, for example, choose to identify with certain students on campus after they no longer consider themselves to be recent immigrants. She did not designate the factors that would encourage them to channel their academic energies and maintain self-esteem.

In summary, the research of Suarez-Orozco (1989) and Matute-Bianchi (1986) analyzed the effects of status on language minority students' motivation and achievement. They provided evidence that some Mexican-descent students internalize the caste-like status defined by Ogbu (1983), thereby limiting their linguistic, academic, and socio-economic aspirations.

Literature Related to Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition Theories

For the purposes of this study, it is important to understand the three essential components for language acquisition posited by Wong-Fillmore (1985a):

> 1) learners who realize that they need to learn the target language...and are motivated to do so;
> 2) speakers of the target language who know it well enough to provide the learners with access to the language and the help the learners need for learning it; and
> 3) a social setting that brings learner and target language speakers into frequent enough contact to make language learning possible. (p. 3)

She maintained that if any of these components does not function properly, language acquisition can be difficult or impossible. This brief review of current second language acquisition theories will, therefore, be organized around the following factors: the learner, the input, and the interaction.

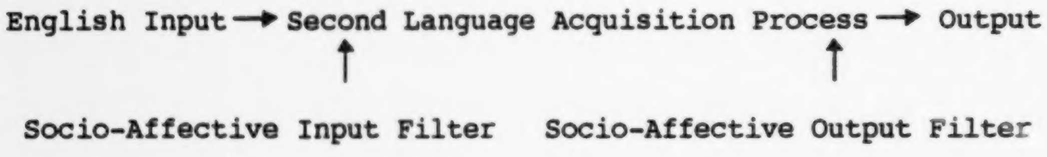
Second Language Learners

Language acquisition research identifies the learner's motivation as a key factor in successful second language development. According to Gardner & Lambert (1972) and Krashen (1981a), it can be of two types. Integrative motivation is based on a speaker's desire to be part of the culture in which the language is spoken. Instrumental motivation leads a person to want to use a language for practical purposes such as learning about a culture or for knowledge transfer. Although integrative motivation is the stronger of the two, either of them helps a learner to acquire or "pick up" a language. If language minority students find that they cannot identify with the lifestyles of the speakers of the target language, they may become less and less motivated to learn the language (Gardner & Lambert, 1972). Peer pressure among minority adolescents to reject second language proficiency and academic progress was a key finding by Labov (1972).

Macnamara (1973) acknowledged the importance of both instrumental and integrative motivation, but he emphasized the motivation inherent in trying to communicate a message: "The really important part of motivation [is] in the act of communication itself, in the student's effort to make his own meaning clear" (p.64).

A lack of some type of motivation functions to block language acquisition in much the same way as a lack of self-confidence or other anxieties. Dulay and Burt (1977) posited the existence of an affective filter which Krashen later called a socio-affective filter and defined in his Socio-Affective Filter Hypothesis (1981a, 1981b, 1982a). He theorized that persons who are in a comfortable environment are more likely to understand messages and to attempt to speak without fear of making mistakes. Students' motivation, as well as attitudes, beliefs, and emotional states all determine whether they will be able to understand input and later produce output in the target language (Krashen, 1982a, 1985). These affective factors, therefore, influence the rate and degree of language acquisition as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The role of the socio-affective filter in second language acquisition. (Scarcella, 1990, p. 58. Adapted from Krashen, 1982a.)


English Input → Second Language Acquisition Process → Output
Socio-Affective Input Filter
Socio-Affective Output Filter

Second Language Input

Traditional second language instruction has relied on the use of formal learning. Some theorists make a distinction between acquiring and learning a second language. Krashen (1981b, 1982a, 1983) hypothesized that second language learning involves conscious strategies for memorizing the grammar and vocabulary of a language. He posited that second language acquisition is a subconscious process which occurs naturally through communication in which speakers are concerned with meaning not form, similar to the process of first language acquisition in children. He maintained that only acquisition leads to fluency.

In his Monitor Hypothesis (1977, 1981a, 1982a) Krashen posited that acquisition is responsible for initiating and maintaining communication while learning is used only as a monitor. This places learning in a peripheral position since many fluent speakers have not had formal education in a language or have forgotten rules they once learned or do not have time to recall these rules in the course of a conversation conducted at a normal rate. This hypothesis also has applications for the use of acquired rules of first language (L1) while communicating in the second language (L2). Krashen maintained that this substitution will occur only as long as acquisition of the L2 is incomplete. Krashen (1985) offered additional arguments supporting the differences between acquisition and learning.

The distinctions between second language acquisition and learning are not universally accepted. In Thought and language (1986), Vygotsky posited significant differences between spontaneous learning in first language acquisition and the formal learning process with subsequent languages. He claimed that "the influence of scientific concepts on the mental development of the child is analogous to the effect of learning a foreign language, a process that is conscious and deliberate from the start" (p. 195). He stated that proficiency in a second language is based on learning: "Easy, spontaneous speech with a quick and sure command of grammatical structures comes to him [student] only as the crowning achievement of long, arduous study" (p. 195).

More recent theorists argue that Krashen's dichotomy between second language acquisition and learning is too simplistic. Stevick (1980) and Ellis (1986) suggested that rules that are repeatedly applied may become internalized. Long (1988) presented research showing that some grammar instruction may help to improve the rate at which grammatical structures are acquired.

This ongoing debate over the distinction between second language acquisition and learning has had the effect of limiting the importance of traditional language instruction in classrooms. The contributions of formal grammar and vocabulary study to individual or cultural language learning styles is still in question, but current research shows that students achieve fluency through linguistic input that is clarified through interaction.

The second major factor, then, in Wong-Fillmore's (1985a) model is access to the target language through appropriate input. She specified that speakers of the target language must modify language according to the needs of the language learners:

> Language produced by speakers in social contacts with learners can serve as input when it has been produced with the learners' special needs in mind. It is not ordinary language, but language which has been selected for content and modified in form and presentation. It tends to be structurally simpler, more redundant and repetitive. (p. 4)

In his input hypothesis, Krashen (1981b, 1983, 1985) maintained that acquisition requires "comprehensible input." Krashen explained that if messages are understandable yet just beyond the listener's level of proficiency (i+1), progress will be made in acquiring a language. Optimal input should be interesting and/or relevant so that learners concentrate on meaning not form. There has to be enough input for acquisition to take place. Learners should be allowed to acquire vocabulary and unsequenced structures during a "silent period" (much shorter for adults than children) that requires them only to indicate comprehension rather than produce language. Krashen posited that if these conditions are met, speech emerges naturally after such a period.

Krashen discussed many types of simplified codes such as caretaker speech (input from teachers and other native speakers) and foreigner talk (communication between non-native speakers) that make input more comprehensible. He noted that, in the case of foreigner talk (Ferguson, 1975) or interlanguage (Selinker, 1972), comprehensibility is more important than grammatical correctness.

Hatch (1983) and Krashen (1980) gave similar suggestions for language modification techniques which are important applications of second language theories for second language classrooms. Most of these are used naturally by parents or caretakers when speaking to children acquiring their first language.

- slower but not distorted speech
- clearer articulation
- longer pauses at natural breaks
- increased volume on key words
- exaggerated intonation
- appropriate body language and movements
- vocabulary to include high frequency words
- use of nouns rather than pronouns as referents
- clarification and paraphrasing of unfamiliar words
- use of objects, visuals, or gestures as clarification aids
- use of simplified syntax (shorter sentences with fewer clauses)
- key topics emphasized by repetitions and expansions
- focus on here and now and avoidance of abstractions for beginning students
- acceptance of nonverbal or limited verbal responses

If these modification techniques are used, Krashen (1980, 1981b) stated that the classroom may be the best place for adults to acquire a second language up to the intermediate level precisely because it is difficult for them to get enough "comprehensible input" in the outside world. Three teaching methods that emphasize comprehension and de-emphasize early language production are Asher's (1969) Total Physical Response Approach, Brown and Palmer's (1988) Listening Approach, and Krashen and Terrell's (1983) Natural Approach.

Young children usually receive appropriate input when acquiring both first and second languages in everyday life because they are spoken to with caretaker speech. Older learners are usually given inappropriate adult-level input in a second language. Cummins (1981) specified that the reason this adult-level input is inappropriate is that it is often decontextualized and cognitively demanding. Interaction is difficult, and in some cases impossible, under these circumstances.

Second Language Interactions

The third factor in Wong-Fillmore's (1985a) model for language acquisition is interactions between speakers and learners of the target language that occur frequently enough for acquisition to take place. She indicated, however, that these interactions may be less important for some learners than others.

There is another ongoing debate over the importance of interactions to the language acquisition process. Krashen (1985) specified that "the Input Hypothesis predicts that actual two-way interaction with native speakers is not necessary for acquisition" (p. 33). He indicated, however, second-language research supports the fact that two-way interactions aid acquisition by allowing for negotiation of meaning which increases comprehensible input. He concluded by stating that a weak form of the interaction hypothesis is consistent with the input hypothesis while a strong form of it is not. According to Hatch (1983), Larsen-Freeman (1983) and Krashen (1985), interaction can facilitate input, the weaker form of this hypothesis

Swain (1985) argued fpr a stronger stand on the importance of interaction for language acquisition. She suggested that learners need what she called comprehensible output, as well as comprehensible input. While working with immersion students in French, she found that opportunities for interaction were limited and that students felt no pressure to improve their linguistic strategies:

> There appears to be little social or cognitive pressure to produce language that reflects more appropriately or precisely their intended meaning; there is no push to be more more comprehensible than they already are. (p. 249)

In her Comprehensible Output Hypothesis she proposed that students need the opportunity to experiment using language that is slightly beyond their current level of second language proficiency just as Krashen (1981a, 1985) proposed that students need to hear language that is just beyond their current comprehension (i+1).

Swain's output hypothesis also corresponds to Vygotsky's (1978) concept of a zone of proximal development which, when applied to second language learning (which Vygotsky himself did not do), suggests that a student's potential achievement is bounded on the lower end by his/her current proficiency level and on the upper end by the opportunities for improvement offered by optimal conditions for input and interaction with speakers who can help. It is only by using available human resources that progress is made:

> An essential feature of learning is that it creates the zone of proximal development, that is, learning awakens a variety of internal developmental processes that are able to operate only when the child is interacting with people in his environment and in cooperation with his peers. Once these processes are internalized, they become part of the child's independent developmental achievement. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 90)

Richard-Amato (1988) compared Vygotsky's and Krashen's concepts in this way:

> Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development and Krashen's i+1 are similar concepts, both offering insights into the cognitive processes involved in language acquisition. Contrary to Piaget, who proposed one level of cognitive development, Vygotsky and Krashen implied two levels: an actual level and a potential level. While Vygotsky stressed the *importance* of social interaction, Krashen stressed the *nature* of the input. (p. 42)

Wong-Fillmore (1985b) noted that, for many reasons, human resources are not always available to LEP students outside of school:

> Contrary to the usual assumptions that children learn language mainly from peers outside the classroom and not from teachers, it appears that for many LEP (limited English proficient) students, the only place in which they come into regular contact with English speakers is at school. Their language learning, if it is going to take place at all, is going to happen at school. The classroom can be an ideal place to learn English if it allows students to be in close and continuous contact with teachers and classmates who speak the target language (English) well enough to help in its learning. (p. 19)

Many communication-based approaches to direct language instruction are built on research which has shown that interaction aids language acquisition (John-Steiner, 1985; Seliger, 1977; Wong-Fillmore, 1976). Some of these classroom approaches include the

Interactive/Experiential Approach (Cummins, 1989), the Whole Language Approach (Heald-Taylor, 1989), and Cooperative Learning (Kagan, 1989).

In summary, this review of relevant literature discussed current research on the roles of learner, input, and interaction in the second language acquisition process. It provided a conceptual framework that identified motivated learners, comprehensible input, and sufficient and meaningful interaction as factors in second language acquisition. Even though this review has examined acquisition in ESL classrooms, these considerations are equally applicable to language acquisition through content areas such as those discussed in Scarcella (1990). They also provide insights into language input and usage outside of the classroom which contribute to acquisition.

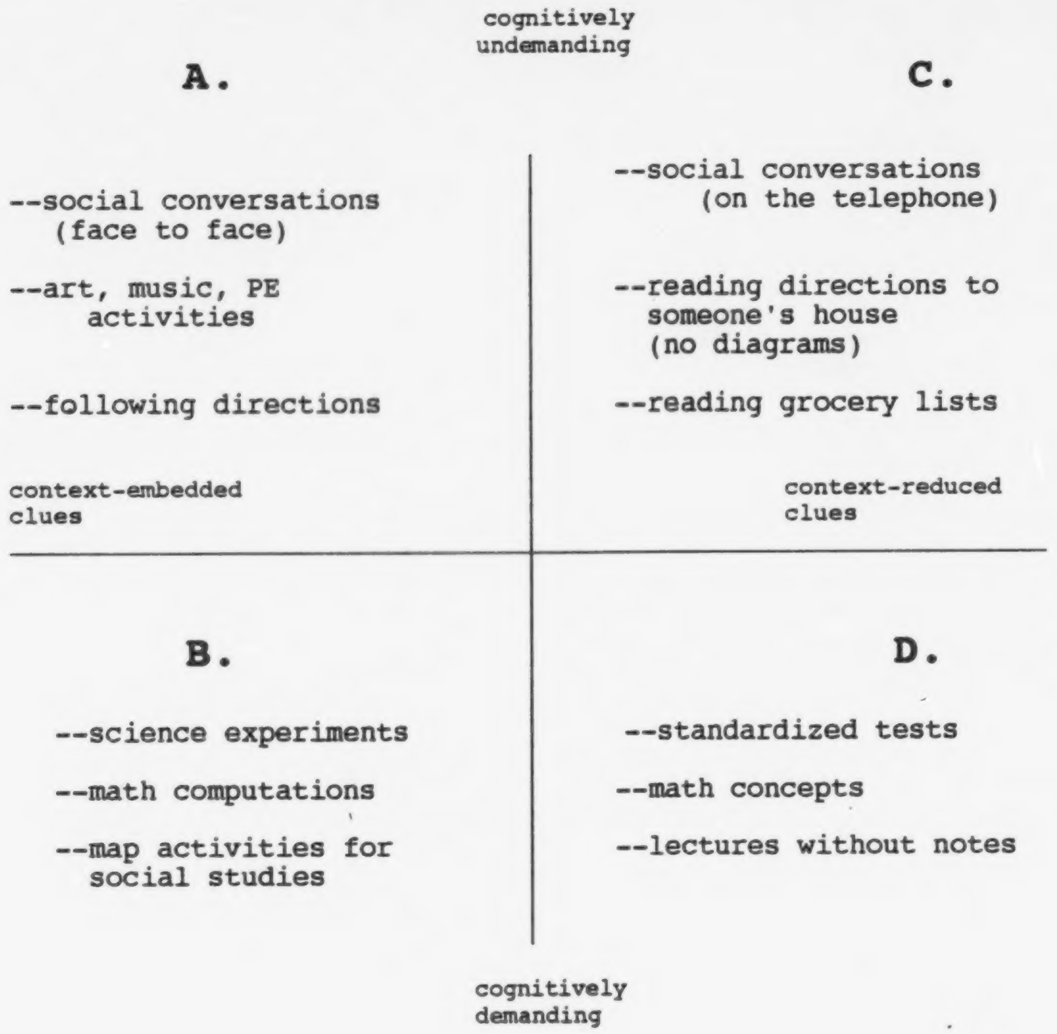
Theories of Bilingual Cognitive Development

Cummins' research provides insights not only in the process of second language acquisition but also in the cognitive effects of bilingualism. Although much of his work is concerned with the process of childhood bilingualism, he also addresses the effects of bilingualism on second language learners of all ages.

Cummins (1979) maintained that adequate first language skills must be the basis for an academically and cognitively beneficial form of bilingualism. In his threshold hypothesis he explained that limited bilingualism, low proficiency in both languages, results in negative cognitive effects or subtractive bilingualism. Partial bilingualism, native-like level in one of the languages, produces neither positive nor negative consequences. Proficient bilingualism, high levels in both languages, results in positive cognitive effects or additive bilingualism.

To explain how competency in L1 is related to competency in L2, Cummins (1981) proposed a model that graphically portrays the different processes in second language development. His model takes into account a general developmental perspective, the acquisition context, and the relationship between the first and second languages. Using a horizontal axis that represents contextual support and a vertical axis that represents the amount of active cognitive involvement in aspects of language functions, the model (Figure 1) has four quadrants (A, B, C, D) showing relative range of difficulty for communicative activities. "Real" world activities (in quadrant A) are often cognitively undemanding and context embedded, but classroom activities (in quadrant D) are usually both context reduced and cognitively demanding. Figure 1 shows types of interchanges that are discussed in this study and where they would be placed on Cummins' quadrants:

Figure 2: Range of contextual support and degree of cognitive involvement in communicative activities. (Cummins, 1981, p. 12. With examples added.)

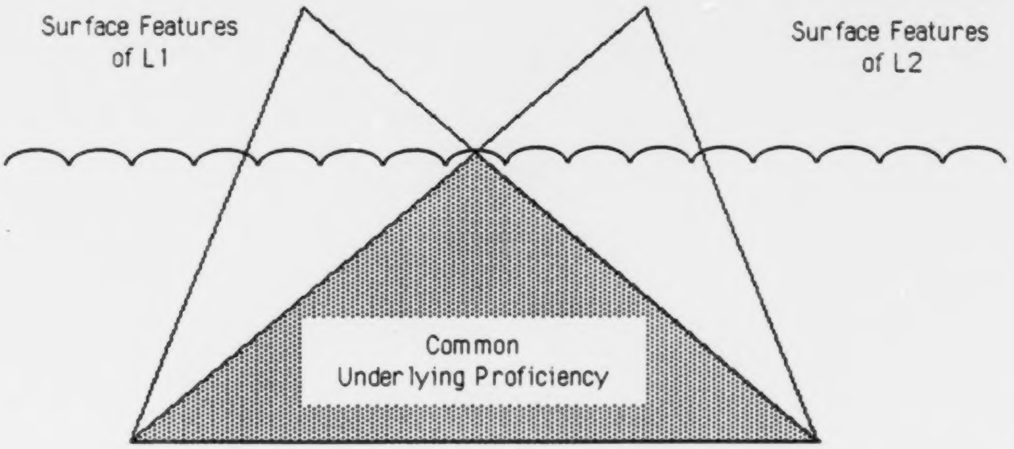

cognitively undemanding
A.
C.
--social conversations (face to face)
--art, music, PE activities
--following directions
--social conversations (on the telephone)
--reading directions to someone's house (no diagrams)
--reading grocery lists
context-embedded clues
context-reduced clues
B.
D.
--science experiments
--math computations
--map activities for social studies
--standardized tests
--math concepts
--lectures without notes
cognitively demanding

Cummins (1981) used the terms Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) to refer to the left and right sides of the horizontal axis respectively. BICS are interpersonal communication skills that require competence with the sounds (phonology), structures (syntax), and vocabulary (lexicon) of a language. CALP is a function of literacy skills that are usually developed in an academic setting.

Teachers often assume that an ability in BICS implies an equivalent proficiency in CALP. Students who can function conversationally are frustrated at being unable to learn from academic presentations where there are no contextual cues and no opportunities to negotiate meaning.

Cummins maintained that students are more likely to understand meaning in second language academic settings if they have processed this information in their first language. He introduced the theory of Common Underlying Proficiencies (CUP)(1980, 1983) to explain why students' academic accomplishments are not invalidated when they learn a second language. He discarded the notion of Separate Underlying Proficiencies (SUP) which would claim that cognitive abilities function independently in each language that a person speaks. He maintained that it is logical to assume that a person can transfer knowledge from one language to another within the normal functioning of the brain. He used two very effective visual models to graphically portray the relationship of languages to a common cognitive base. His iceberg model (see Figure 3) was adapted from Shuy's (1981) schema of deep and surface features of a language. It graphically illustrates the common cognitive base of languages in a bilingual's brain and suggests that surface features of each of the languages become more automatic while the underlying proficiency is involved in more cognitively demanding tasks.

Figure 3. The "dual-iceberg" representation of bilingual proficiency. (Cummins, 1981, p. 24.)



As a corollary to the CUP Theory, Cummins (1983) proposed a linguistic interdependence hypothesis which states that second language development will vary according to proficiency in the first language when intensive exposure to the second language begins:

> To the extent that instruction in Lx is effective in promoting proficiency in Lx, the transfer of this proficiency to Ly will occur provided there is adequate exposure to Ly (either in school or the environment) and adequate motivation to learn Ly. (p. 29)

Cummins (1989) made what he referred to as an important connection between this interdepdendence hypothesis and Krashen's idea of comprehensible input. He maintained that knowledge acquired through interaction in one language makes input in the second language more comprehensible. If the concept of "liberty," for example, has been acquired in Spanish, the new label in English need only be applied to a conceptual understanding. "The more background knowledge we have, the more capable we are of understanding and internalizing new input" (1989, p. 49).

Cummins (1983, 1986, 1989) claimed that research supports the fact that older children make faster progress than younger children in learning a second language once their mother tongue has been firmly established. He stressed the impact of socio-cultural factors, including group status, on this process (Cummins, 1989; Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins, 1988).

Krashen (1983) gave three specific reasons why older students learn languages faster: they are better conversational managers and can get more "comprehensible input;" they know more about their world and can use existing schemas for new input; and they can speak sooner by transferring syntax rules from their first language with varying degrees of success.

Krashen stated that younger language learners tend to achieve higher levels of proficiency, however, because they are more relaxed and therefore have a "lower affective filter." Accent reduction was the other important advantage that both Krashen (1983) and Cummins (1980, 1983) discussed for younger language learners. They maintained that the fear of making mistakes and sounding like a foreigner are major concerns for older learners.

In summary, this review of literature on bilingual development has discussed the cognitive benefits of additive bilingualism, the importance of contextual support for cognitive involvement in second language learning, the Common Underlying Proficiency Theory of second language development, as well as differences in adult and child second language learning.

Language acquisition and bilingual cognitive development theories, however, are only part of the picture. When students enter a second language program, they learn not only the language but also the culture in which that language is imbedded. It is what Damen (1987) calls the "fifth dimension in the language classroom." For minority students studying a language in its "country of origin," language acquisition cannot be separated from cultural identity issues.

Literature Related to the Role of English in Multicultural Education

The interwoven themes of language and cultural identity run through the educational history of the United States as well as any country with multicultural populations. As stated by Trueba (1989):

> Language and culture are so intimately related during the process of early socialization that one cannot be studied without the other. Examining language isolated from cultural factors leads to a serious misunderstanding of the minority person's process of resocialization and consequently of integration, knowledge acquisition, and successful participation in the various institutions of the host country.(p.13)

The role of English in American schools has caused contentious debates within our political and educational institutions. The historical, social, and bureaucratic legacies of these debates lay the groundwork for understanding the experiences of today's newest Mexican immigrants whose uniqueness becomes blurred as faceless statistics refer to them as "language minority students with limited English proficiency."

To indicate the complexity of Mexican immigrants' current situation in American schools, this review of relevant literature will briefly examine the role of language in multicultural education. This review will be organized as follows: first, from a general historical perspective, second, from a historical perspective with a focus on Mexican issues, and third, from a cultural/ecological perspective. Finally, legal considerations for the role of language in multicultural education will be briefly addressed.

General Historical Perspectives

As a nation primarily composed of immigrants with strong linguistic traditions, native-language schools were common from colonial times through the nineteenth century. Until the turn of the century bilingual education was common and legalized whenever there was an ethnic group with sufficient numbers, interest, and resources to establish a school or a class (Kloss, 1977).

Much of this acceptance of cultural and linguistic diversity was undermined by isolationist tendencies sparked by the Spanish American War and escalated during the two world wars. As quoted in "Bilingual Education," 1987, President Theodore Roosevelt expressed the feelings of many Americans when he said:

> There is no room in this country for hyphenated Americanism...Any man who comes here...must adopt the institutions of the United States, and therefore, he must adopt the language which is now the native tongue of our people, no matter what the several strains of our blood may be. It would not be merely a misfortune, but a crime to perpetuate differences of language in this country. (p. 22)

Although there were many differences in assimilation and acculturation patterns between the twentieth century's first two great waves of immigrants as described in DeVos and Romanucci-Ross (1975), Dinnerstein and Jaher (1977), Hartmann (1967), Meister (1974), English was the medium of instruction for immigrants in most school settings.

As explained in Cremin (1961), many Americans at the turn of the century questioned whether the U.S. would be able to successfully integrate large numbers of immigrants. By 1909, the U.S. Immigration Commission found that 57.8% of the children in America's 37 largest cities had foreign-born parents. Sixty different nationalities were identified by this Commission which referred to them as racial varieties. Churches and organizations like Jane Addams' Hull House, New York's Greenwich House and Los Angeles' Bethlehem Institute did their best to aid the immigrants' settlement, but the bulk of the "Americanization" process fell to the schools which served as language, recreation, and civic centers.

The Division of Immigrant Education of the U.S. Commission on Education gave little in the way of specific guidelines for helping teachers deal with the masses of non-English-speaking and sometimes illiterate children. Schools merely dealt with the problems pragmatically. Massachusetts started "steamer classes" intended to give children enough English to function in a regular classroom. Some states started evening classes in

English for all ages. Well-meaning teachers often tried to use inappropriate materials, such as romantic poetry, as an introduction to English.

A typical educator's misconception of the scope of the problem was quoted in Daniels (1920):

> We used to have an Americanization problem, but we haven't got one any longer. Several years ago we got all the foreigners in our town some English and civics classes and in two or three months we Americanized 'em all. (p.5)

There were two main views of education's role at the turn of the century as described by Thompson (1920): assimilation and cultural pluralism. Most popular was the melting pot goal which stated that immigrants should be assimilated as quickly as possible into America's language, institutions, and values. Even today most Americans reject the idea of cultural pluralism and promote cultural reproduction as a primary goal of our educational system.

The melting pot philosophy has had profound ramifications for groups like Mexican Americans whose long history in the United States has been marked by linguistic and cultural conflict.

Mexican Perspectives

Mexican immigration patterns are distinct from those described above. It is beyond the scope or needs of this study to give a detailed history of Mexican Americans such as that provided in Acuña (1988), Keefe and Padilla (1987), and Mirande (1985). A brief synopsis, however, is necessary to contextualize the realities of immigrant life for the participants in this study and their counterparts across the U.S..

As neighboring countries, the histories of Mexico and the United States intertwine through shared if unequal patterns of Spanish conquest and colonization that extend back to the early sixteenth century. After successfully achieving their respective goals of independence, the demands of the United States' westward expansion clashed with the territorial rights of Mexico's Aztlán in the Spanish American War. As a result, Mexico lost nearly one-third of its territory, and the United States gained much of what are now the southwestern states. Only after 1848, when the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo was signed ending the Spanish American War, was it possible to use the term immigrant to describe Mexicans living in the Southwest. Before that time, they were living on land belonging to their own country (unless, of course, Native American claims are considered).

The xenophobic climate that infected the U.S. after the Spanish American War caused linguistic, cultural, and economic repression of both recent immigrants and long-time inhabitants of the American West and Southwest who had maintained their linguistic and cultural heritage. Twenty-one states with large Latino populations had laws requiring English as the exclusive language of instruction in public schools. In seven of these states, including Texas, teachers were subject to criminal prosecution and loss of their teaching credentials if they were caught teaching in a language other than English. Students were routinely punished for using Spanish anywhere on school grounds. By not valuing Spanish while trying to teach standard English, the school system invalidated the students' culture as well as their language.

Students became, in effect, second-class citizens or what Ogbu (1987a, 1987b, 1988) and Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi (1986) called a "caste-like minority," a status similar to that of Native Americans, African Americans, and mainland Puerto Ricans whose children do less well in school than "immigrant minorities." Unlike the assimilation patterns of other immigrant groups where mother tongues were lost within a generation or two, the Spanish language endured but changed into authentic regional language varieties commonly known as Chicano English (Peñalosa, 1980; Penfield & Ornstein-Galicia, 1985; Ornstein-Galicia, 1984). Group boundaries with the dominant culture intersected but never merged because of Mexican Americans' self-ascripted and other-ascripted ethnic identity that was reinforced by language usage (Barth, 1969).

The border between Mexico and the United States has remained "fluid" for political, social, and economic reasons. Northern movement across the border was common, especially during periods of political unrest in Mexico such as The Mexican Revolution. Cyclical repatriations of Mexican immigrants, and sometimes Mexican Americans, took place without legal proceedings or regard for their political or economic needs and rights. For example, thousands were sent back to Mexico between 1929 and 1935, as well as during "Operation Wetback," a massive campaign begun in 1954. Mexican immigration has been intermittently encouraged to accommodate the needs of the U.S. economy. The bracero program of the forties and the current *maquiladora* industries and migratory labor practices are only a few examples of the American government's self-serving polices. The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 intended to control illegal immigration by imposing severe penalties on employers.

The Mexican American population has increased rapidly primarily as a result of continued Mexican immigration. The first large wave in the 1920's brought between one and one-half and two million Mexicans across the border. More than four million arrived between 1940 and 1964 (Vigil, 1988). Another six to twelve million came during the seventies. Mexican immigration contributed significantly to 1990 census figures which showed that the Latino population increased by 53% in the nation and 69% in California during the last decade. Most agree that these figures do not include all of the illegal immigrants currently living in this country who may be undercounted by as much as 6% (Clifford & Roark, 1991). According to research done by Cornelius, director of the Center for United States-Mexican Studies at the University of California at San Diego, more than half of the legal and illegal immigrants from Mexico come to California (McDonnell, 1991).

As presented in McDonnell (1991), a recent study by Vernez and Ronfeldt of the Rand Corporation challenged many traditional assumptions about Mexican immigrants. The findings of the Rand research disputed stereotypes of Mexican immigrants and presented their northward movement as a multifaceted process not accurately reduced to the image of uneducated, single, male farm workers supporting families back in Mexico. McDonnell's research found that many of today's immigrants are better educated, include growing numbers of women, and more often look for service sector and manufacturing jobs in urban areas that will more easily allow them to stay in the United States permanently.

Census figures for 1990 revealed another aspect of immigration patterns that deny facile explanations. These data showed that it is not only urban centers that are experiencing a large influx of immigrants. Farming areas such as Fresno, California experienced a 626% increase in the size of its Asian population during the past decade. Suburban areas and mid-size cities, such as the one chosen as the site for this study, are finding that their populations are increasing rapidly because of the arrival of large numbers of mainly Latino and Asian immigrants. Although the number of Hispanics in California increased by 69.2%, their growth in San Bernadino County, the location for this study, was 128%. As quoted in Clifford & Roark (1991), Estrada, a professor of urban studies at UCLA and a census adviser, stated that the move to suburban areas is partly due to "the search for inexpensive housing, suburbanization of jobs and the efforts of people to escape the inner-city environment" (p. A29). Unlike the pattern of other immigrant "waves" in the United States, the suburbs are becoming the original destination of both legal and illegal newcomers, rather than the second or third point during the search for upward mobility and home ownership. Estrada concluded that ethnic growth in both rural and suburban areas must be due to newcomers since census figures show no significant exodus of either Asians or Hispanics from urban areas.

Recent data from the 1990 census and Rand Corporation studies, therefore, serve at least two important functions in helping to understand the realities of life for newcomers from Mexico. They provide empirical evidence that breaks down the monolithic image of the Mexican immigrant and that records the significantly different contexts in which these immigrants currently function.

Recent census and immigration data cannot, however, explain why these differences have not produced improvements in Mexican immigrants' educational achievement and socio-economic status. Cultural/ecological perspectives offer some insights on these issues.

Cultural/Ecological Perspectives

Hispanic students are 50% less likely to complete high school than their non-Hispanic counterparts (Suarez-Orozco, 1987). Durán (1983) reported that elementary and secondary school underachievement patterns continue through college. Walker (1987) stated that only 2.4% of Hispanics have majors in engineering; 2.2% in biological sciences; .8% in physical sciences; and that only 1% get an M.A. in biology, physics, or mathematics.

Ogbu (1987a) posed a very logical question when he asked why these same types of statistics are not true for all minority groups:

> Why do some minorities successfully cross cultural boundaries and/or opportunity barriers and do well in school? Why do some other minorities lack success in crossing cultural boundaries and/or opportunity barriers and, therefore, perform less well in school. (p. 317)

Explanations have historically been based in three major traditions: 1) deficit models that include rationales for either biological or cultural deficiencies of certain groups; 2) cultural conflicts and discontinuities in communication; and 3) the psychosocial impact of minority status.

Deficit Models

Biological determinism as denounced in Cummins (1984), Gould (1981), Suarez-Orozco (1989), Trueba (1987), among many others, refers to the mistaken belief that inherited racial characteristics, including low intelligence, result in low school achievement.

This belief has survived the debunking of craniometry tests of the last century and resurfaced recently under the guise of scholarly investigation (Jensen, 1980; Dunn, 1987). In his monograph, for example, Dunn stated that Latinos "simply don't understand either English or Spanish well enough to function adequately in school" (p.49). He claimed that this is genetically based:

> Most Mexican immigrants to the U.S. are brown-skinned people, a mix of American Indian and Spanish blood, while many Puerto Ricans are dark-skinned, a mix of Spanish, black, and some Indian. Blacks and American Indians have repeatedly scored about 15 IQ points behind Anglos and Orientals on individual tests of intelligence. (p.64)

Ogbu (1978) presented the many problems with intelligence testing when used cross-culturally, especially among ethnic minorities. He maintained that since Dunn's arguments were based on prejudices and fear of "at least the partial disintegration of the United States of America" (p. 66-67), they will certainly survive in the philosophy of isolationist groups such as English Only.

Cultural deprivation (sometimes called the damaging culture view) is another form of deficit model that continues to blame the cultural patterns of Mexican home life for the educational problems of Mexican children. Proponents believe that the socialization of Mexican Americans does not prepare them for life in a literate, technological society. This theory has been convincingly countered by Brischetto & Arciniega (1973); Carter & Segura (1979); Gamez (1979); and Ramírez & Castañeda (1974) who clearly demonstrated that Mexican children had become the victims of the ethnocentric focus and stereotypes of their culture's critics. Like biological determinism, its proponents seem to arise periodically, fed by prejudices and myths.

The deficit models were summarized to present an overall picture of societal reactions to Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants in a school setting. This study will not, however address either biological determinism or cultural deprivation as logical explanations for the scholastic underachievement of Mexican immigrants.

Research has shown that the needs of Mexican and Mexican American students are not being met by their teachers, schools, and communities. Some of the reasons are deeply rooted in American society; others can be explained by cultural differences in communication

Cultural Discontinuities in Communication

Labelled as cultural conflicts in the 1970s, cultural discontinuities in communication can be defined as "certain misunderstandings [that] emerge in the process of ethnic interaction and lead directly to interethnic conflict and nonlearning on the part of minority students" (Suarez-Orozco, 1989, p. 32). This line of thinking placed the problem with teachers who do not understand culturally distinct students. It implied that there are major differences in Hispanic world views to which teachers must become sensitized without reducing cultural differences to stereotypes that inhibit or distort communication.

Cultural discontinuities in classrooms with Spanish-speaking students have been the focus of much educational research, but once again most studies have been done with young children. Hymes (1972) stressed the importance of studying language usage in context, of "starting where the children are" (xiv). He maintained that "the participants in the situation must themselves in effect be ethnographers of their own situation" (xiv). Saville-Troike (1982) pointed out that the American educational system " is one which serves primarily to prepare middle class children to participate in their own culture" (p.141). She stated that "visible minorities" are most likely to experience discontinuities and to be treated as stereotypes of their ethnic groups.

Minority Status

As previously stated, linguistic and cognitive perspectives only give a partial picture of the factors affecting the educational experiences of language minority children.

The status of minority groups has been recognized as a determining factor in the high rate of academic failure of low status groups in many countries with multicultural populations.

The most often cited experiment demonstrating this fact was the St. Lambert project which showed the affective as well as cognitive benefits of additive bilingualism among both English-speaking and French-speaking Canadians (Cummins, 1983, 1989; Lambert & Tucker, 1972).

Fishman (1976) provided a summary of educational problems in ten countries stemming from the low status of minority populations. His examples included the Finns whose educational achievements are much higher in Australia than in Sweden where their status is denigrated. The same is true of Bura-kumin, a minority with low-status in Japan which functions well in the United States. The plight of these and other minority groups were later discussed in Spolsky (1986) and vividly presented by language minority persons themselves in Skutnabb-Kangas & Cummins (1988).

To explain observed differences in minority status, Ogbu (1987b) established a taxonomy of minority groups whose boundaries are either self-ascripted or ascribed by the dominant society. His arguments are based on the notions of societal forces and culturally determined boundaries. He described clear distinctions between autonomous, immigrant, and caste-like groups which generally internalize the status designated by the dominant society. In reference to the United States, he described the caste-like groups as follows:

> Castelike or involuntary minorities are people who were originally brought into United States society involuntarily through slavery, conquest, or colonization. Thereafter, these minorities were relegated to menial positions and denied true assimilation into mainstream society. American Indians, Black Americans, Native Hawaiians are examples. In the case of Mexican Americans, those who later immigrated from Mexico were assigned the status of the original conquered group in the southwestern United States, with whom they came to share a sense of peoplehood or collective identity. (p. 321)

Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi (1986) warned, however, "that we must understand cultural phenomena without stereotyping individuals within groups...Not all Mexican-descent people in the United States can be categorized as caste-like or non-immigrant orientation" (p.75).

A basic understanding of the differences between "immigrant minorities" and of Mexican immigrants' orientation as "caste-like minorities" offers important theoretical considerations for self-confidence and motivation as they influence language usage. Becklund's (1985) article posed relevant questions about Mexican immigrants in American schools. He asked if they dropped out to return to Mexico or if they stopped studying because they had to work to help their families. He asked how they lost their desire to study. Was it because they did not think their legal status would allow them to continue or do they "share an inner conviction that schooling is irrelevant to the nature of their reality?" (p. 3).

Suarez-Orozco (1989) examined many of the same issues raised by Becklund who differentiated between Mexican immigrants and Central American refugees. Based on Ogbu (1986, 1987b, 1988), Suarez-Orozco found the following to be characteristics of immigrant minorities such as the Central American refugees in his study: 1) They chose more or less freely to leave their country of origin for socio-economic reasons. They do not have experiences of being downtrodden by the dominant society of the United States. 2) They are "birds of passage" who have the possibility of returning to their homeland. This helps them to endure hardship and discrimination. 3) They view their experiences here in terms of opportunity. They have not had time to internalize the effects of discrimination. 4) They have a dual frame of reference. No matter how bad things are, they are better than what they left behind. 5) They have a basic belief that hard work will at least benefit their children.

Many of the generalizations about immigrant minorities cited above, apply equally to recent Mexican immigrants. Suarez-Orozco (1989) stressed, however, that "several factors seem to discount the Mexican case as a heuristically paradigmatic immigrant minority" (p.45). 1) There is a continuing resentment among Mexican Americans, including immigrants, that the Mexican Republic lost one-third of its territory to the United States. 2) Mexican immigrants leave behind a system of peonage based on their country's colonial and post-colonial experiences. They often come from lower status groups who have faced "caste-like situations" in Mexico. 3) Seasonal migration and closeness to the United States make Mexican residents aware of the "subordination status of their brothers and sisters in the United States." 4) Anglos continue to treat Mexican immigrants as caste-like minorities rather than immigrants. 5) Many Mexican immigrants do not have legal documents to live, work, and study in the United States.

Although the second factor cited by Suarez-Orozco (1989) has been challenged by the recent Rand immigration studies as cited in McDonnell (1991), the fact remains that recent Mexican immigrants have fewer years of schooling than their American counterparts and that they work in disproportionate numbers of lower paying and lower status jobs. How long will it take these immigrants to internalize the attitudes of the dominant majority?

Trueba (1989) acknowledged the "collective inability of these groups to respond to the social and cultural discontinuities (and rejection) presented by the dominant culture" (p.12). He insisted, however, on acknowledging the successes of individual minority students whose place as the focus of attention is taken over by incoming minorities whose subjugation may be more successful. He also insisted on acknowledging individual differences among families who share language and culture but who may have a different value orientation and/or understanding of how institutions in the dominant culture work. He sees no reason to deny the possibility and value of change at the "micro" level while maintaining a concern for the broader societal perspective at the "macro" level.

Cummins (1989) insisted that the larger societal context must be part of any plan to effectively counteract what amounts to institutionalized racism against language minority students. Cummins asserted that changes must take place which involve a redefinition of teachers' and schools' roles with minority students and communities. This "redefinition involves a commitment to empower minority children both personally and academically rather than just to transmit a body of knowledge and skills" (p.52). Cummins proposed a model which included incorporation of minority students' language and culture, the minority community's participation, and an orientation toward critical pedagogy and appropriate assessment of minority students.

Research in multicultural societies, including the United States, has indicated that the status of language minority students has a strong impact on educational achievement and eventually on socio-economic mobility. Although this fact has been recognized by the makers of educational policy, as explained in Sobul (1984) their recommendations are not often implemented in ways that encourage the linguistic, cognitive, and social development of language minority children.

Legal Considerations

> Basic English is at the very core of what public schools teach. Imposition of a requirement that, before a child can effectively participate in the education program, he must already have acquired those basic skills is to make a mockery of public education. (Lau v. Nichols, 1974)

The role of bilingual education has remained part of a politicized debate which underscores the current functioning of ESL programs. As explained by Teitelbaum and Hiller (1977) and Leibowitz (1980), the federal government first provided funds for bilingual education in the Bilingual Education Act of 1968.

The Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, issued a memo on May 25, 1970, whose recommendations for language minority students were later upheld by the Lau v. Nichols decision. The following recommendations were made:

1. Where inability to speak and understand the English language excludes national origin-minority group children from effective participation in the educational program offered by a school district, the district must take affirmative steps to

> rectify the language deficiency in order to open its instructional program to these students.
>
> 2. School districts must not assign national origin-minority group students to classes for the mentally retarded on the basis of criteria which essentially measure or evaluate English language skills; nor may school districts deny national origin-minority group children access to college preparatory courses on a basis directly related to the failure of the school system to inculcate English language skills.
> 3. Any ability grouping or tracking system employed by the school system to deal with the special language skill needs of national origin-minority group children must be designed to meet such language skill needs as soon as possible and must not operate as an educational dead-end or permanent track.
> 4. School districts have the responsibility to adequately notify national origin-minority group parents of school activities which are called to the attention of other parents. Such notice in order to be adequate may have to be provided in a language other than English. (United States Office for Civil Rights, 1970)

It was not until the Bilingual Education Act of 1974, however, that guidelines were given regarding language of instruction. It specified that English should be taught while the language and culture of non-native speakers should be preserved to help children progress through the American educational system.

The landmark Lau v. Nichols decision of 1974 decided that equal educational opportunities have to include more than just access to the same facilities, teachers, textbooks, and curriculum in the case of students who cannot understand English. In other words, Lau v. Nichols stated that these students had a right to a means of learning the language of instruction. This could be accomplished by either teaching the students to speak English or by providing instruction in their native language.

The original Bilingual Education Act was reauthorized in 1978, and the terms Non English Speaking (NES) and Limited English Speaking (LES) were changed to Non English Proficient (NEP) and Limited English Proficient (LEP) to reflect an emphasis on proficiency in all four language skills. These new labels, however, continued to imply linguistic deficiency.

Even though they do not carry the weight of law, the Lau Remedies, issued by the Office of Civil Rights, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, are the most specific guidelines ever issued by the federal government in regard to language of instruction and special services offered to language minority students in public schools. They indicate five options for educating non-English-dominant children, with bilingual education recommended but not required at the elementary level. ESL instruction is one of the options listed at both the secondary and intermediate levels. School districts are made to bear the burden of proof that whichever approach they choose will be equally effective in ensuring equal educational opportunity. The fact remains that nationally most high schools choose to educate their immigrant students through ESL programs because the legal mandates have become blurred and open to interpretation.

This is equally true in California which is among the states with highest immigrant populations. In a document entitled Individual Learning Programs for Limited-English-Proficient Students: A Handbook for School Personnel, the Bilingual Education Office of the California State Department of Education has established state guidelines closely adhering to the Lau Remedies which all school districts are expected to follow. Although it is not a legal document, it either quotes or paraphrases sections of the California Administrative and Education Code pertaining to bilingual education. It includes legal requirements and definitions for program content, program placement, staffing, parental involvement, submission of plans and funding. According to this handbook:

> Limited English Proficient students are defined as those who do not have the clearly developed English language skills of comprehension, speaking, reading and writing necessary to receive instruction only in English at a level substantially equivalent to students of the same age or grade whose primary level is English. (p. 5)

In order to identify students who meet this definition, all parents of incoming students must designate the language spoken at home on a "Home Language Survey" (HLS). All children who have a home language other than English must be tested for comprehension and speaking on state-designated instruments. All children in grades three through twelve must be tested on district-designated instruments if they fall in the fluent range on tests of aural and oral ability. If a student is tested as less than fluent in any of the four language skill areas (listening, speaking, reading, writing) he/she must be placed in an appropriate language program.

ESL instruction is a required component of all instruction at the elementary school level. Content area instruction in the primary language is suggested but not required whenever there are ten or more students of the same language group and when bilingual teachers are available. At the secondary level, schools must provide the means to understand classes taught in English, but are similarly not required to teach classes in the students' first languages. The primary goal of all programs for LEP students at the secondary level is to teach them English, not to produce bilingual speakers.

The educational goals for language minority students as specified by the California State Department of Education (1983) are as follows:

> 1) attain high levels of oral English proficiency;
> 2) achieve, to the best of their abilities, in academic areas, including reading, writing, and mathematics; and
> 3) experience positive psychosocial adjustment to life in a complex, multicultural society. (p.1)

The Bilingual education handbook. Designing instruction for LEP students (1990) published by the California State Department of Education states:

> The main responsibility of a bilingual program, as defined by the California Legislature, is to help limited-English-proficient students become fluent in English and strive toward academic parity (Education Code sections 60002-62005.5). Modern research has found that the fastest and most effective way for most students o retain both fluency and parity is through developmental instruction in the home language supplemented by English-as-a-second-language classes...Limited-English-proficient students should have access to the same socially enabling body of knowledge, skills, and ways of thinking about the world available from the academic core as English-speaking students receive. (p.vi)

Language minority students' use and acquisition of English in American schools is directly affected by the volatile debate over language of instruction in American public schools. Students' ability to function in both ESL and content area classes is determined by the establishment and implementation of policies at national, state, district, and site levels.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter has been organized into three parts: a rationale for the use of qualitative/naturalistic methodology, a general description of qualitative research, and a presentation of the research methodology used in this study. The presentation of the methodology used in this study includes descriptions of the following: the research site and community, the research site's academic programs for language minority students, the initial entry into the research site, the continued entry into the research site, the selection of participants, the data collection, the data analysis, and the feedback to co-researchers and teachers. Also included in the presentation of the methodology is a summary timeline of the study, a timeline of the study in chart form, a format of the report of the findings, and a summary of the findings.

A Rationale for the Use of Naturalistic/Qualitative Methodology

The goal of this research was to determine the conditions under which students think they acquire and use English as a second language in an English-only high school program. Since the design of a study should be consistent with its objectives, qualitative rather than quantitative methodology was chosen as most appropriate. Students' opinions, as collected through semi-structured interviews and participant observations and analyzed through the constant comparative method of data analysis, were selected as the most reliable source of information.

Anyone who has tried to learn a second language has experienced the frustration of not understanding and not being able to communicate. These memories are especially poignant for older learners who dislike feeling helpless, inadequate, or foolish. For most Americans these feelings of ineptitude last only as long as a language class or a short vacation. It is soon possible to stop the exhausting effort it takes to strain for comprehension and response. Feelings of identity and self-worth may be affected, but they are usually intact after these linguistic and cultural experiences.

Mexican immigrants who enter the American educational system as adolescents must battle to survive socially and academically in a language and culture that is not their own and that accepts them only as second class citizens (Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Ogbu, 1987a, 1987b, 1988; Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Suarez-Orozco, 1987, 1989). What are their perspectives on their linguistic experiences both in and out of the classroom? How do they make sense of their own efforts in the context of an American high school setting?

My study was conducted to collect, analyze, and describe teenage co-researchers' opinions of their linguistic and cultural experiences. These data were then used to suggest ways to make secondary multicultural educational systems more responsive to the needs of immigrant students.

The following research question rather than a formal hypothesis was used as the basis for this inquiry: Under what conditions do recent Mexican immigrants say that they use and acquire English in an English-only high school program? Students' voices were selected as the most reliable source of the connections that must be made between the multiple realities of students' experiences and life in today's classrooms.

Grumet (1990) explained the importance of such connections in this way:

> If teaching is about our relations to the world, then we must let the world into our method. If the world we have comes to us though (sic) our relations to other people, then those relations as they appear in the transferences, ideologies, and systems of thought that shape our culture must be there too. Narrative is a form for inquiry that can contain both the world and the relations within which it becomes the focus of our attention, a locus of concern, a system of meanings...(p. 107)

Oldfather (1991) expanded upon a metaphor used by Bogdan and Biklen (1982) to suggest the importance of these connections. She described a jigsaw puzzle whose pieces will eventually form a picture whose box cover has been lost. Through careful effort the image becomes clear as parts are linked, bringing the whole into focus. Oldfather was careful to bring out, however, that puzzles can be put together in one way only, which is not the case with data collected in qualitative research. Since there is not a single right answer, bits of information can be sorted in different ways, emphasizing different aspects of the picture. The picture, in turn, can be compared to others that have been painstakingly assembled, forming the basis for grounded theory as explained by Glaser and Strauss (1967). This continuous inductive process is one of the key characteristics of qualitative research which distinguishes it from the deductive, hypothesis-testing mode of quantitative research.

A General Description of Naturalistic/Qualitative Inquiry

Lincoln & Guba (1985), formally presented a paradigm for naturalistic inquiry in terms of five basic axioms. As defined by Bogdan & Biklen (1982), a paradigm is "a loose collection of logically held-together assumptions, concepts, or propositions that orient thinking and research" (p. 30). These axioms were presented as follows: First, the naturalistic position states that understanding involves multiple realities rather than a single truth that can be predicted and controlled. Second, it acknowledges that knower and known will interact and influence one another. Informants are seen as co-researchers rather than subjects. Third, its goal is to describe individual cases which then form the basis for a "working hypothesis." Fourth, it holds that causes and effects are continually shaping each other to the extent that they often become indistinguishable. Once again, this is distinct from a cause and effect relationship that is the goal of positivist inquiry. Fifth, qualitative research makes every attempt to be rigorous but not to be value-free. It acknowledges that choosing a research paradigm, framing a research question, citing relevant theory, and analyzing and collecting data within a consistent framework all involve value judgments. The operational procedures used in this study were consistent with the naturalistic paradigm described above.

Bogdan & Biklen (1982), Guba & Lincoln (1985), and Eisner (1991) described the characteristics of qualitative research. Each agreed that qualitative research should be conducted, if possible, in the natural setting since actions and statements can best be understood in as much of the total context as the researcher can discover. They stressed the importance of human interaction as a source of data rather than pencil and paper instruments because only people can adapt to the changing demands of research, thereby facilitating an emergent design. Only human instruments are capable of reflection which capitalizes on the tacit or intuitive knowledge of both researcher and informants. This reflective process is a vital feature in the inductive analysis of qualitative data. Bogdan & Biklen (1982), Guba & Lincoln (1985), and Eisner (1991) explained the importance of narrative since "thick descriptions," the phrase coined by Geertz (1973), take nothing for granted. Through details, anecdotes, and quotations the researcher "makes the familiar strange and the strange familiar." Eisner (1991) called special attention to the use of expressive language and personal voice because qualitative researchers do not try to "neutralize" their findings by detaching themselves from either the process or the findings.

Bogdan & Biklen (1982), Guba & Lincoln (1985), and Eisner (1991) advocated a phenomenological approach, that is to say, understanding the meanings that participants attach to their everyday experiences. From varied examples such as Spradley's 1971 study of the "culture of skid row drunks" to Wolcott's 1973 study of "the man in the principal's office" to Heshusius' 1981 study of "persons labeled retarded in a group home," the role of researchers remained constant. They tried to determine what sense their informants make of the world around them.

Qualitative research is often challenged as weak in the areas of internal and external validity, objectivity, and reliability. Guba & Lincoln (1985) rejected the procedures and even the terms designated by quantitative research since they are inconsistent with the naturalistic paradigm. They preferred the term trustworthiness that can be assured through equally rigorous but different processes. They specified that the validity of findings can be established through credibility, dependability, and confirmability: credibility through prolonged observations or contacts recorded in "thick descriptions"; dependability through verification of data by multiple sources and multiple instruments (triangulation); and confirmability through verification of data by informants (members checking) or by colleagues (peer review or auditing). Complete objectivity is seen as neither possible nor valuable in qualitative research. The question of reliability or generalizability is acknowledged as problematic in naturalistic research since studies are contextualized. "Thick descriptions" encourage readers to find similarities to their own situations.

Eisner & Peshkin (1990) edited a series of responses to these same concerns about qualitative research. Walcott's chapter in this book offered some refreshing insights to otherwise circular arguments. Talking about validity he stated, "And instead of replying, 'That's your problem,' we too hastily replied, 'We've got it'" (p. 125). He went on to say that validity of data, unlike reliability, may be one of the major strengths of qualitative research since researchers like himself "go to considerable pains not to get it all wrong (p.127)."

I have also attempted "not to get it all wrong" in the collection and reporting of findings. As a first generation Italian-American, I have a personal view of what it means to grow up in a bilingual household. As both a student and teacher of second languages, I am very involved in the process of second language acquisition. As a researcher, I am familiar with the relevant literature in this field. Throughout this project, I have attempted to acknowledge these experiences yet "bracket" them while interviewing and observing in schools so that I would not push emerging categories into conforming to existing theory or my personal realities.

The Research Methodology Used in This Study

A Description of the Research Site and Surrounding Community

The campus of Capital High School was originally built to be used as a college in 1911. Rebuilt from 1933 to 1939, it retained the feel of a small college campus with its wood-panelled library and administrative entryway, large, high-ceilinged classrooms, anddepartmental buildings and athletic facilities scattered over 65 acres. Shaded grassy areas and convenient cement benches offered natural places for students to congregate. In short, it was a charming educational setting which administrators considered a nightmare to "patrol."

It was located in a large, well-established community of 133,179 inhabitants, within commuting distance of Los Angeles. Although sprawling construction encircled and invaded the city, many of its streets were lined with elegant homes dating back to the heyday of the area's citrus trade. The neighborhoods immediately around the school had comfortable, well-trimmed houses. To the south and east of the campus, housing was less expensive, attracting lower income families. Both local, state, and national media had focused on tensions reflected by gang activity in the area and at Capital High. Vigil's book, Street life and identity in Southern California (1988), presented a picture of gang life that was partially researched in the communities around Capital High.

Although the downtown area was being renovated with antique and craft shops that emphasized Americana, corner shops catered to the needs of the ethnically diverse community. Grocery stores stocked staples for Latino and Asian kitchens; offices and banks dealt with international money transfers and shipments. Signs for medical and legal services were commonly multilingual. Bilingual clerks were usually available for Spanish-speaking customers. Speakers of Asian languages such as Vietnamese, Chinese, and Thai had a more limited but still available selection of stores and offices where they could shop in their language.

Although exact statistics on ethnic composition were not available, the Latino community consisted of some South Americans, many Central American refugees, and an overwhelming majority of Mexican Americans and Mexican immigrants. These residents acted as hosts to newly arrived family members or friends. Since it took only a few hours to reach the Mexican border, there was a constant flow of Mexicans into and out of this area for economic, social, and educational reasons. Sometimes entire families moved to the U.S.; other times young people took off on their own to work and/or study in California. While here, they often had to move to find jobs or housing with different family members.

Capital High was one of six schools in its high school district. Like all schools in this district, it was experiencing a steady increase in the percentage of language minority students who came from at least nineteen different countries. According to the California Basic Educational Data (CBEDs) of October, 1990, 2786 students were enrolled in the following proportions at Capital High School: 1368 Hispanics (49%); 1061 Anglos (38%); 208 Blacks (7.5%); 94 Asians (3%); 36 Pacific Islanders and Filipinos (1%); and 19 Native Americans (.7%) (percentages do not total 100% because of approximations). The largest groups of Asians came from Vietnam and Indonesia. Although 49% of the students were designated as Hispanic this was a bureaucratic designation rather than an indication of linguistic dominance or place of birth. Of this 49%, the following were recorded places of birth: 1% in Central America, 3 students in Cuba, 12% in Mexico, and 35% in the United States.

The student population at Capital High School was highly transient. Academic, counseling, and support staffs were kept busy processing entries and departures. Neither the school district nor Capital High itself had compiled statistics on students who left the school before graduation.

With the help and cooperation of the school staff, I analyzed the retention rate and departure rationale for a group of students exiting ESL 3, the most advanced level of ESL classes offered at Capital High. The following statistics reflect the transiency situation among immigrants in this school, most of whom drop out before the end of their third year. Out of 35 students who finished the ESL 3 class at the end of the 1989-90 school year, twelve (34%) left Capital High School, none as graduating seniors. Of this 34%, three students (9%) gave no reason for their departure; six (17%) moved to other cities in California; one (3%) moved to Mexico; and two (6%) did not graduate as seniors (one with no plans to continue and one with plans to continue at an adult education school).

A high percentage of the student population at Capital High qualified for Chapter 1 funding for at-risk students. According to available statistics, 54% of the class of 1993 and 68% of the class of 1994 scored at or below the 36th percentile in reading, writing, language, or math on the California Assessment Test (CAT).

No statistics have been compiled on the number of students from Capital High who go to two-year or four-year colleges after graduation.

The Research Site's Programs for Language Minority Students

Twenty-four percent of the student population at Capital High was designated as Limited English Proficient according to procedures established by the state of California for the 1990-91 school year. The IDEA Oral Proficiency Test II (IPT), the instrument chosen by the school district to determine oral language proficiency, was administered in English to all students who indicated that English was not their first language on the Home Language Survey (HLS). It was administered in Spanish to most students who indicated that Spanish was their first language. Some Spanish-speaking students were also tested to determine their reading ability in their first language. If a language other than English was found to be dominant, students were designated Non English Proficient (NEP) or Limited

English Proficient (LEP) and placed in ESL classes, based on IPT scores, unless parents requested otherwise. Subsequent language proficiency testing was primarily done at teachers' requests, not at regular intervals. Only after students had achieved fluent or mastery level (F or M) proficiency in the IPT in English and had scored above the 36th percentile on the California Assessment Test (CAT) were they redesignated Fluent English Proficient (FEP).

Scores on the English IPT II determined placement in one of the three levels of ESL classes. Students at level 1 had three ESL classes per semester: ESL 1, ESL pre-reading, and Life Skills. Students at level 2 had two ESL classes per semester: ESL 2 and ESL reading. Students at level 3 also had two English classes per semester: ESL 3 and reading. Students designated FES/LEP were tracked into remedial, basic, college preparatory, or honors/GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) English and social studies classes.

Placement in academic classes was limited by English language proficiency. The following guidelines (Figure 4) were used by counselors to determine class placements for all NEP and LEP students at Capital High during the 1990-91 school year. Some courses such as art and typing did not appear on this list but were routine placements for ESL students at all levels. Mathematics placements were made on the basis of a site-level test.

Figure 4. Class placement guidelines at Capital High School.

ESL--All GRADE LEVELS

IPT II: A	BC	DE	FM
NES/LEP ESL 1 ESL Pre-Reading ESL Life Skills Span/Span Skrs Mixed Chorus Sh Biol (10,11)	LES/LEP ESL 2 ESL Reading Sh W Hist (9,10) Sh US Hist(11,12) Mixed Chorus Sh Biol (10,11) Span/Span Skrs Health (10,11,12) Life Sc(10,11,12)	LES/LEP ESL 3 Reading Sh W Hist (9,10) Sh US Hist(11,12) Sh Biol (10,11) Span/Span Skrs Health (10,11,12) Life Sc(10,11,12)	FES/LEP Place according to instructional reading grade level equivalency

Although extracurricular activities were ostensibly open to all students on campus, few Mexican immigrants participated in any of them. The notable exception in sports was soccer which attracted many Mexican boys. There were no organizations geared to the interests and needs of immigrant students. The Spanish Club, organized by American students of Spanish as a foreign language, invited Mexican students to its meetings and encouraged them to communicate in Spanish. MECHA (*Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán*), was organized by Chicano students who did not encourage immigrants to participate. There are plans to establish a club for international students at Capital High during the 1991-92 school year.

Pilot Studies: Initial Entry into the Research Site

My initial role at Capital High was not that of a researcher. During the 1989-90 school year as a faculty associate with the Teacher Education Department of the Claremont Graduate School, I was an advisor to two teacher interns who taught at Capital High School. Among the classes they taught were sheltered world history and beginning ESL. I observed their classes during the first semester and became acquainted with the administrative staff.

During the winter of 1990, I used this ethnically diverse campus as the site for a pilot study. My goal was to determine how, when, and why Mexican and Asian participants thought they were learning to communicate in English at Capital High. I wanted to find out about their comprehension in classes, their language-learning strategies, their interactions in English and their first language, and their motivation for learning English. I gathered data through qualitative research methods, mainly semi-structured interviews.

With the approval of the principal, I interviewed a total of six students at Capital High for this pilot study, three of them Mexican and three Asian (two Vietnamese and one Indonesian). These students were chosen with the help of my two teaching interns whom I asked to recommend students who were motivated to learn English. Each participant was interviewed twice for periods lasting approximately 40 minutes. Second interviews were used to confirm, correct, clarify, and supplement information from the first interviews. I was able to use my notes as a bi-weekly observer in their classes as well as their teachers' comments to collect students' statements.

All interviews for the pilot study were tape recorded and transcribed in the language in which they were conducted. Students were encouraged to tell their stories relating to second language experiences in their own way. All interviewees were asked similar versions of the following focus questions in random order as they fit into a conversational format:

1) How would you describe your past and present English classes?
2) What successes or failures have you experienced when trying to understand and use English both in and out of your classes?
3) Do you need to learn English? Why?
4) Do you use your first language? Explain your answer.
5) What can you and your teachers do to help you learn English ?

Using the constant comparative method of data analysis, I looked for patterns which emerged from interviews and re-interviews. All of the informants' comments were coded and categorized according to meaning. As patterns developed between categories, they were recorded as reoccurring themes. Descriptors for categories were identified as properties according to the system explained in Bogdan & Biklen (1982). I consistently attempted to code individual statements in the context of the informants' total interviews. In cases of doubt, their clarifications in subsequent interviews served to both minimize misconceptions and to lead to other discussions.

The interviewing and analysis process for this pilot study lasted from January through May of 1990. At that time, I wrote a report whose goal was to describe and analyze the English language experiences of those six immigrant students, using as many of their own words as possible. I continued my duties as advisor to the teaching interns at Capital High through the middle of June so that my contact with the school was not broken in any way.

Since I was uncertain if I wanted my research to involve a comparative study of two schools, I followed the identical methodology at Washington High, located seventy miles closer to Mexico, where bilingual classes were offered in Spanish and Lao, the language of Laos. With the cooperation and assistance of teachers and on-site administrators, I interviewed three Mexican immigrants and three Lao immigrants, none of whom had been in the U.S. for more than three years. Students' statements were analyzed according to the procedures described above, and data was compared and contrasted with the findings from Capital High. No formal report of these findings has been written.

The Current Study Defined: Continued Entry into the Research Site

As I spent the summer reviewing my data, it became clear that the pilot studies were invaluable. I decided to limit my current study to Mexican immigrants at Capital High and return to my work with Asian students at a later date. Working with Asian and Mexican students at two different schools was beyond the scope of my resources. I chose to work with Mexican students because my fluency in Spanish enabled me to function more easily with them as both interviewer and participant observer. I could interview Mexicans at all levels of English proficiency and would not have to exclude those who could not speak any English. As a participant observer my knowledge of Spanish also enabled me to understand and participate in natural student conversations both in and out of the classroom.

In addition to helping me refine the focus of my research, the pilot studies also helped me determine the most appropriate methodology. I had learned that I could use semi-structured interviews to enable students to describe their language experiences. I decided to include more observations in my methodology since they allowed me to ask pertinent questions and to understand students' responses more fully. I added the technique of "shadowing" each of my interviewees on campus for two days which would enable us to discuss their reactions to language experiences as they were happening or shortly after they happened. I hoped this additional contact would also help to establish a greater confidence level with participants. I wanted to share language experiences with them in a variety of settings: from classes to lunch, from locker rooms to sports events.

The pilot studies also suggested the focus areas for interviews and participant observations. Students had told me that speaking English was their primary concern but that literacy skills were also important to them. They had cited a few instances of successful oral communication and many problems they had experienced in understanding, speaking, reading, and writing English. They said they had insufficient opportunities to speak English with monolingual Americans. They indicated that they relied heavily on bilingual friends, teachers, and self-help for survival in classes. They said that some teachers planned activities where they could use English successfully, but that they were uncomfortable trying to speak English in most classes.

With these student concerns in mind, I decided to examined three overlapping areas: how co-researchers functioned as language learners, intergroup and intragroup language usage patterns in and out of the classroom, and what educational factors aided or impeded the use of English. I recorded language choice and form in specific instructional and social contexts. I noted who initiated speech acts and for what purpose, and I looked for instances of language learning and help-seeking strategies. Although I paid particular attention to the student I was "shadowing" that day, the student's linguistic interactions were described as part of the whole classroom environment. During the interviews, students explained their language use outside of school. This data was analyzed and presented to contextualize their linguistic experiences at school.

Rather than a checklist approach to describing classroom interactions, I took detailed field notes which were cited many times in the findings of this report. I quoted participants fully, whenever possible, and gave descriptions of their behavior and their linguistic interactions in specific settings both in and out of the classroom. It was often possible to determine the meanings that participants attached to their actions and verbal interchanges since we discussed my observations between classes and at lunchtime, as well as during recorded interviews.

Field notes also included complete descriptions of my experiences and discussions on and off campus with other students, teachers, administrators, and staff at Capital High School and its district office. These have also been cited as findings in this report.

Beginning in the fall of 1990 I devoted myself full-time to my research project at Capital High. With the cooperation and assistance of the principal and his staff, I visited the school four to five times each week for the first semester of the school year. At our initial meeting, the principal set the tone for my entire stay at CHS when he said that they were being challenged by large numbers of language minority students who were very transient. He explained that second language education was new to most of his current ESL staff but that they were "trying." He suggested that I work through the Foreign Language/ESL Department Chairperson to contact teachers.

The Foreign Language/ESL Chairperson invited me to explain my project at an ESL teachers' meeting. This saved me the task of contacting these teachers individually to ask for their assistance and to give them details of my project. I asked for their help in selecting at least 3 students from each of the three ESL levels in the school. I explained that the main criterion for selection would be student motivation, not necessarily achievement.

After giving each teacher a written explanation of my research project (see Appendix A for a copy of this introductory letter that was eventually sent to all participating teachers), I said I would contact them as I began to work with students at individual levels, starting with those in ESL 1 . I asked the ESL teachers if I could visit their classes to get a general idea of their program and students. All of them agreed and we set up specific appointments for classes they wanted me to visit.

During these first two days of general observations in beginning ESL classes, I gained an overview of the language program and instructors for beginning students. I learned that classes at Capital High were generally large with up to 35 students. Teachers had a wide range of ESL backgrounds and teaching experiences, and they used different strategies and materials while teaching the same courses. Two teachers confided that they were teaching on emergency teaching credentials and that they had never taught ESL before. A veteran English teacher and an experienced social studies teacher told me that this was their first year working with ESL students. They both said that they had volunteered to work with language minority students and were anxious to learn how to do it effectively. Three ESL instructors demonstrated materials and techniques they had been using for one to four years after participating in extensive training as Language Development Specialists.

Enthusiasm for my research project was strongest from one of the ESL 1 teachers who offered both suggestions and support. Both her interest and knowledge made her one of my key teacher contacts at CHS. Dorothy Martin's (not her actual name) dry sense of humor, deep concern for her students, and uncanny ability to "tell it like it is" made her insights invaluable.

My role as participant observer evolved and changed with the forty different teachers I observed and the fourteen students I "shadowed." Teachers occasionally asked me to function as a Spanish-speaking aide which I willingly agreed to do. I explained schedules and forms to new students, reminded a student that he would be dropped from a class if his grades did not improve, and helped to monitor the progress of independent and small group work. Some teachers were visibly concerned that their students did not understand what was happening in their classrooms. I was asked to repeat homework assignments in Spanish and to translate words into Spanish.

I had serious difficulties defining my role as participant observer in one class where the teacher occasionally asked for my input but felt his role was threatened when students asked me questions:

> Teacher: [to Jorge] "*Respecto*. Do you want to leave?"
> Jorge: [starting to say something to the researcher]
> Teacher: [to Jorge] "Don't look at anybody else. I'm the teacher. I'll tell you what to do. Respecto." to Saúl] "Saúl, spell 'squirrel'."
> Saúl: "s-q-u-i-r-l"
> Teacher: [choosing one of the students with hands raised] "Pablo."
> Pablo: "s-q-u-i-r-r-e-l"

Teacher: [after writing the word incorrectly on the board] "Is that correct, Mrs. Baker?"
Observer: "No."
Teacher: "You are right, Pablo." (10-17-90,5)

In subsequent observations, this same teacher continued to ask for my input in class even when I tried to disavow any expertise. My role as participant observer in this one class was never resolved. When new co-researchers were selected, I moved to the next level of ESL classes which this instructor did not teach.

A separate area of concern for me as a participant observer was which language to use with bilingual students, especially in English classes. I decided not to make the choice; I spoke the language of the students' choice. I responded in whichever language students used, unless teachers specified that only English was to be used during a particular activity. I followed the same guideline when I was a participant observer in students' between-class, lunchtime, and after-school conversations. If students initiated a dialog in Spanish, I continued to use that language as long as they did. I wanted to observe, not determine language usage so I had to fight my natural instincts as an ESL teacher to speak English with ESL students. Recent studies show that young bilinguals will often "follow the leader" in terms of language use although older students may choose to continue speaking the language of their choice if they know the person they are addressing can also speak it (Zentella, 1984). Only three of the participants in this study spoke English with me when we were alone, two of them occasionally, one regularly.

I was also concerned about being asked questions by students when the teacher was presenting a lesson. These questions ranged from defining words like "abolish" (12-10-90, 8) to explaining what a junior high is (10-25-90, 5). I followed the conventions of the classroom I was visiting. Some were more informal than others, and my participation was nondisruptive and welcomed by the teacher. In others, I sat quietly watching when formal presentations were in progress. Once again, I followed the students' lead. They would hesitate to ask me a question if they knew that the teacher disapproved. If I felt that a question was asked at an inappropriate time, I indicated non-verbally that I would respond later.

All teachers were cooperative in allowing me to sit close to students I was "shadowing" so that I could hear their linguistic interactions and be accessible for students' comments. In a few cases, I had to sit outside of hearing range because there were no available seats near co-researchers. I made notations of interactions, however, and later asked students about topics of conversation and language choice.

Interviewees said they understood my observational goals and wanted me to get an accurate picture of their normal linguistic interactions. We talked about classes as having typical or unusual interactions between teacher and students. One informant even suggested I change my physical position during the second day I observed his art class. On the first day I had sat next to him at his worktable since his tablemate was absent. Although this allowed him to give me a running commentary on the class and his classmates, he was concerned that I was not observing his normal behavior. After light-hearted consultation we decided I should sit at a nearby table on the second day so that I could hear and see him "in action" with his friends and the teacher (11-8-90,2).

I was in classes so often with some of the students that I feel certain that my presence did not change their normal routines. Students right next to me continued to copy assignments and even test answers (12-18-90,8). Boyfriends and girlfriends smiled at me and then continued their *tête-à-têtes.*

After my first day of observations, I was treated as a language resource person by students outside as well as inside class. A new student frantically came to me in the hallway, asking where she should go since she did not have a class scheduled for that period. A group of students saw me and asked me to intercede with cafeteria personnel for a student who had lost his lunch tickets for the month. An older student who had learned I spoke Spanish came and asked me for my advice about joining the army as a way to eventually becoming a teacher. In the girls' locker room a new Mexican student looked nervously around and then asked me: "Can you help me, I don't know how to ask if they have the bag with my clothes in it. I lost it?" With a smile or a casual raising of chin and eyebrow, students who had seen me in classes acknowledged my presence wherever they saw me on campus.

Another of my roles that evolved over a period of time was that of a liaison for students having class placement problems. Three students changed math or science classes because of my intervention. The site-level Title VII coordinator encouraged me to inform her of any placement problems I encountered saying that her office had made progress in working with counselors to improve academic placement of immigrant students, but that they were still far from perfect. When I expressed reservations about this being part of my role on campus she said, "What role? We're all here to help kids. Thank you for calling this to my attention" (11-7-90, 10).

Lunch was a unique time to observe group dynamics. I sometimes knew only one or two members of a lunch group so the first time I ate with them, I listened while my "friend" explained what I was doing on campus. This gave me a chance to hear their perception of my role. This was a typical response: "She's writing a book about what students think about this school. She wants to find out when we speak English" (10-23-90, 10). Many conversations with students on campus often started with them asking: "Did you finish your book yet?"

After one lunch with a group, these initial formalities no longer took place unless a new person joined the group for that day. I was generally quiet, waiting to see where their normal conversations would go. If classes or assignments were on people's minds, group members counseled or consoled each other. I was sometimes asked to help with a composition or an assignment which gave me insights into students' writing proficiency and study habits. Both boys and girls talked about graduation requirements and job opportunities. Girls talked about wedding plans and their philosophies of child rearing.

They also talked about their boyfriends and parties with pictures passed around for all to see. I often shared pictures of my family with both boys and girls.

Students were fascinated with all languages, another favorite topic of conversation. During one lunch period, for example, Ana passed around a copy of the Tongan alphabet which her friends looked at with interest. Eva, in turn, taught students how to say hello in Japanese and Vietnamese.

Lunch groups met in regular places: one under a little palm tree, another in a grassy spot a few yards away, a third at the stone benches outside of the home economics building. My male informants tended to eat in the cafeteria at fairly regular tables. If for any reason I was not eating with the person I was "shadowing" that day, I simply joined another group at its regular site. Students who were not my interviewees asked me to join them if they saw me standing alone. There were two groups of girls with whom I felt most comfortable. Spanish was spoken at all times at lunch except by the "palm tree" group which counted an Indonesian girl among its regular members.

Rainy days were a challenge since there was not sufficient room in the cafeteria for all students. It was on such a cold, damp day that students gained one of their few material benefits from sharing their lunchtime thoughts with me. As we sat on a sheltered stairway discussing their preparations for upcoming exams, a school guard came up to the group and said: "You know you're not supposed to be here. Oh, excuse me. I didn't know there was a teacher with you" (12-6-90, 7)

There were many signs of my acceptance, with at least visitor status, into groups. Eva, the jokester, said I had a language all my own and she imitated my hand gestures. I laughingly retorted that both Italians and Mexicans spoke that language. Students delighted in teaching me Spanish slang.

My frequent presence seemed to encourage normal behavior among students. On one occasion two girls next to me teased each other to the point where both parties were getting quite angry. My informant said to me, "They act like that all the time. Don't worry." [10-26-90,7]

Occasionally, my presence acted as a catalyst for discussions that became quickly heated. At lunch one day, a girl said: "Mexicans have problems." Everyone reacted at once with their experiences of being rejected from cheerleading squads and yearbook staffs. The said they were frustrated because their parents' could not speak well enough to intervene at school. There was satisfaction expressed with the comment: "*Gringos* didn't like it when we had a Mexican as homecoming queen." In this type of group discussion students stimulated each other's thinking. They encouraged each other, knowing that they were not alone. On this particular occasion, I had little opportunity for follow-up questions or comments, but many of the experiences discussed were the basis for my questions or comments in formal interviews or other informal conversations.

As a middle-age Italian-American who speaks standard Spanish with near-native fluency, I was obviously not a natural member of these student groups. Students were, however, generous enough with their time to act as co-researchers. Some of their comments indicated that interviewees thought of me as American, but somehow different. Adriana's statement was typical: " [Laughing and pointing to the researcher] I think you came from Italy [You're not like] those from America, America (AE I2,8). Cecilia had a similar opinion, "I have never met an American like you before--whom I could really talk to." (12-19-90, 1). The effects of researchers' age, sex, speech style and in-group or out-group membership has been documented by studies examining discourse patterns (Zentella, 1984). During this study, informants' behavior and statements indicated a confidence level with the researcher that facilitated authentic responses.

Selection of Participants

My criteria for selecting participants were based on nationality, length of stay in the United States, teacher recommendation, previous educational background, and current

English class attended. I wanted to interview Mexican students who had entered American schools at the secondary level and whom teachers recommended based on motivation and effort, not necessarily achievement. Since it is beyond the scope of this study to deal with the many Mexican immigrants who are completely illiterate in their first language, I also looked for participants who had at least completed *la primaria*, elementary school which students in Mexico attend for six years.

To establish a longitudinal view of students' language experiences, I decided to interview at least three students in each of the three levels of ESL classes offered at the high school: beginning (ESL 1), intermediate (ESL 2), and advanced (ESL 3). In addition, I intended to interview three students in their first year out of ESL classes who were attending "regular" English classes. I anticipated having at least 12 informants.

Since I had interviewed three Mexican ESL 1 students on campus as part of a pilot study at Capital High the previous year, I included them as three of my informants. They met my criteria and had agreed to participate in the past. After obtaining their current class schedules, I found that two of them, Yolanda and Gabriel, had progressed to ESL 2 and one of them, José, who had entered CHS in January with no education in English, was still in ESL 1. All of them agreed to continue our dialogs. Their initial comments indicated that some changes had taken place in their attitudes towards their English language instruction and use during the five months since our previous interviews. Gabriel confidently hinted that things were much better this year. Yolanda smiled and quietly said she had more to tell me. José politely suggested that he was not sure if his statements would help me, but that he would be happy to talk. Two of José's teachers indicated that he was not the same eager new student whose teacher had recommended him as an interviewee the previous year. "He runs hot and cold," one teacher explained. "His attitude problem is getting worse," another instructor told me after a class where José had been reprimanded several times for inattention.

Dorothy Martin, an ESL instructor, had described how differently students acted during their second year at Capital High:

> After the first year they start to lose interest because they aren't learning English as fast as they thought they would. This period can be a turning point because even though the kids are never into gangs when they first get here, they get introduced to a lot of stuff. Most of them don't join, but there are some who get involved. Maybe there is some kind of question you can ask them that would get at this. I don't know how you'd ask it exactly. (10-11-90, 3)

I was not sure either, at this point, but the inclusion of three participants from my pilot study added a longitudinal perspective to students' experiences.

ESL teachers at each level provided many recommendations for students in their classes. If I had observed or interacted with some of these students in classes, I was able to discuss teachers' choices with them. In several instances, I asked teachers in other subject areas for their opinions of students who had been recommended. Students themselves often asked to participate. I had no difficulty finding either male or female informants in ESL classes. In fact, I often had to explain that I wished I had the time to talk to more students. I finally selected four interviewees in ESL 1, three in ESL 2, and three in ESL 3.

Finding participants in "regular" English classes proved to be a more complicated procedure. As previously explained, Capital High places English students into one of four tracks: remedial, basic, college prep, and honors. After learning of their system, I decided to try to find an informant in each of these tracks who had completed advanced ESL the previous year. I contacted various English teachers but none were aware of how recently their students had been in ESL classes. No statistics were kept on how students were tracked in English after leaving the ESL program. With the continued cooperation and support of the administrative staff, I volunteered to analyze the English placements for the advanced ESL class of the previous year (1990). As previously stated, only 23 students out of a class of 35 still attended Capital High. Four of them (12%) continued in advanced ESL the following fall; 1 (3%) was enrolled in Resource Specialist (RS) English; 5 (14%)

were in remedial English; 8 (23%) were in basic English; 5 (14%) were in college preparatory English, and none were in honors English. Through teacher and counselor recommendations I found a participant for my study in each of the tracks: remedial, basic, and college preparatory. Since none of the advanced ESL students from that class had been placed in an honors English class, I talked to the English Department chairperson who helped me find the Mexican immigrant in an honors English class who had been living in the U.S. for the shortest period of time. My fourteenth co-researcher had been in California for six years at the time of our interview. He added valuable insights as a student who was highly successful in the American educational system.

I did not seek ideal participants. The details of co-researchers' backgrounds were learned only during the interview process. All interviewees, aged 15-18, were registered as sophomores, juniors and seniors at Capital High School. In some cases their grade level was determined by age rather than academic preparation. At the time of their first interviews thirteen of them had been in the U.S. for periods ranging from one month to three years. The fourteenth was the honors student who had been here for six years.

Participants for this study were chosen from guidelines that might indicate the greatest likelihood of success in the American educational system for recent Mexican immigrants: 1) They had completed at least elementary school and were, therefore, literate in Spanish. Reading test scores in Spanish were only available for one of the interviewees, Carlos (ESL 1), who scored at the 7.9 grade level in November, 1990. 2) Their years of schooling in Mexico gave them an academic background for some of their studies in English. 3) They were recognized by teachers as students who were trying to learn English.

Closer inspection of their backgrounds revealed many differences which may have influenced their successes and problems in acquiring English both in and out of the classroom. Although all of the participants were Mexican nationals, they came from seven different provinces, as well as Mexico City. They came from areas as diverse as a small fishing village in the province of Sinaloa, a *rancho* in Jalisco, and the heart of Mexico City. Although their transcripts indicated completion of similar grade levels, the schools they had attended differed greatly in curriculum, educational resources, and quality of teaching.

Interviewees came from Mexico's educational system which is divided into six years of elementary school called the *primaria*, three years of intermediate school called the *secundaria*, and three years of secondary education called the *preparatoria*. Post-secondary options include universities or *institutos* for technical or vocational education.

Participants completed from six to twelve years of schooling in Mexico. One student had completed only the *primaria*. Ten students had attended the *secundaria*, seven of them completing all three years, three of them attending for one or two years. One student had studied for a year at a computer school, an *Institúto de computación*. Another had completed the *preparatoria* and, therefore, had the equivalent of a high school diploma from Mexico. For two students, Capital High was not their introduction to American schools: one had attended a high school in Los Angeles for a semester before transferring to Capital High; another had been in the American educational system for six years.

Three students stated that they had had no formal English instruction before coming to the U.S. Those who had attended the *secundaria* had studied English from two to five times weekly as part of the normal curriculum.

Life experiences for eight of these students included work as well as school. Three of them had jobs in Mexico for periods of two to five years before coming to California. At the time of the interviews, five of them had one or more part-time jobs where they worked from 20 to 40 hours per week. Two of them were the sole support of their families, either here or in Mexico.

Eleven students participated in no extracurricular activities at school. Of the three remaining students, one was on the football team; the honors student was on the soccer and track teams and was a member of the astronomy club; the third participated in the Regional Occupational Program (ROP), a work-training program.

The family lives of these students differed dramatically. Nine of them had experienced voluntary or involuntary separation from parent(s) for extended periods of time. Four of them lived with aunts and uncles; six lived with both parents. Three of them had parents who were divorced; two had fathers who were deceased. All fathers living in the U.S. worked in unskilled or semi-skilled occupations; two were unemployed. All mothers living in the U.S. were homemakers except for three who worked in semi-skilled positions. Education levels of parents ranged from 0 to 12 years. The median years of schooling for fathers was six and one-half years and for mothers was six years.

Each of these students, regardless of background, shared his or her experiences and insights, successes and disappointments. I have attempted to keep their messages intact.

Figures 5, 6, and 7 provide a summary of information obtained from student questionnaires (see Appendix B for a copy of a student questionnaire). Figure 5 and Figure 6 contain personal and family background information. Figure 7 indicates courses taken by students at the time of the interviews.

FIGURE 5: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF CO-RESEARCHERS IN ESL 1 AND ESL 2

	ESL 1 (SD)	ESL 1 (CE)	ESL 1 (GM)	ESL 1 (JT)	ESL 2 (GD)	ESL 2 (RQ)	ESL 2 (YA)
city, prov. of origin	La Reforma, Sinaloa	Distrito Federal	Puebla, Puebla	Guanajuato, Guanajuato	Distrito Federal	Mexicali, B.C.	Zacapú, Michoacán
prev. school (yrs of ed)	primaria (6 yrs)	inst de comp (10 yrs)	preparatoria (12 yrs)	primaria + 1 (7 yrs)	secundaria (9 yrs)	secundaria (9 yrs)	secundaria (9 yrs)
prev. Engl. classes	0	0	2 yrs-5x wk México	0	3 yrs-3x wk México	3 yrs-5x wk México	3 yrs-2x wk México
age (grade)	17 (11)	17 (10)	16 (11)	17 (11)	17 (11)	16 (10)	17 (10)
arrival/U.S.	1990 (June)	1989 (Feb)	1990 (Sept)	1989 (Dec)	1989 (June)	1989 (Sept)	1989 (July)
enrolled /CHS	1990 (Sept)	1990 (Sept)	1990 (Sept)	1990 (Jan)	1989 (Nov)	1989 (Sept)	1989 (Sept)
period of no schooling	5 yrs (in Mex)	5 months (in U.S.)	none	5 yrs (in Mex)	2 months (in U.S.)	none	none
sch activity	none	football	none	none	none	none	none
curr job	none	none	none	none	pizza parlor	grocery store	none
occupations							
father	truck driver (unemployed)	fact worker	salesman	fact owner (in Mex)	fact worker	fact worker	fact worker
mother	homemaker (in Mex)	teacher	homemaker	homemaker	homemaker	fact worker	homemaker
education							
father	6 yrs	7 yrs	10 yrs	8 yrs	12 yrs	12 yrs	6 yrs
mother	4 yrs	12 yrs	9 yrs	3 yrs	4 yrs	6 yrs	6 yrs
living with	father, stepmother & siblings	father, stepmother & siblings	uncle, aunt & cousins	uncle, aunt & cousins	parents & siblings	uncle, aunt & cousins	parents & siblings

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FIGURE 6: BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF CO-RESEARCHERS IN ESL 3 AND "POST-ESL" ENGLISH CLASSES

	ESL 3 (ME)	ESL 3 (AN)	ESL 3 (BT)	"P-ESL"(AE)	"P-ESL"(CM)	"P-ESL"(MN)	"P ESL"(RF)
city, prov. of origin	San Miguel de Allende, Guanajuato	Tacupa, Michoacán	Distrito Federal	Chihuahua, Chihuahua	Teocuitatlán de Corona, Jalisco	Culiacán, Sinaloa	Guadalajara, Jalisco
prev. school (yrs of ed)	secundaria + (9 1/2 yrs)	secundaria (9 yrs)	secundaria (9 yrs)	primaria + 2 (8 yrs)	secundaria (9 yrs)	primaria + 2 (8 yrs)	primaria - 1/2 + 4 1/2 (in US) (10 yrs)
prev. Engl. classes	3 yrs-2x wk México 1/2 yr (US)	3 yrs-2x wk México	3 yrs-5x wk México	2 yrs-3x wk México	3 yrs-4x wk Mexico	2 yrs-3x wk México	4 1/2 yrs US
age (grade)	19 (12)	15 (11)	18 (12)	16 (11)	18 (11)	18 (11)	17 (12)
arrival/U.S.	1988 (Sept)	1989 (Aug)	1988 (Aug)	1988 (June)	1988 (Aug)	1988 (July)	1984 (Dec)
enrolled /CHS	1989 (April)	1989 (Sept)	1988 (Sept)	1988 (Sept)	1988 (Sept)	1988 (Sept)	1989 (Sept)
period of no schooling	none	none	none	none	none	none	none
sch activity	ROP	none	none	none	none	none	soccer, track astronomy club
curr job	ROP	grocery store	office, restaurant	none	none	none	none
occupations							
father	deceased	deceased	laborer (unemployed)	sanitation worker	gardener	rest. worker	indust. mech.
mother	homemaker	homemaker (in Mex)	secretary (unemployed)	seamstress	homemaker	army packer	shipping clerk
education							
father	0	6 yrs	6 yrs	7 yrs	2 yrs	9 yrs	6 yrs
mother	2 yrs	3 yrs	6 yrs	12 yrs	5 yrs	6 yrs	6 yrs
living with	mother & siblings	uncle, aunt & cousins	parents & siblings	parents & siblings	parents & siblings	mother & siblings	parents & siblings

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FIGURE 7: CO-RESEARCHERS' CURRENT CLASSES

ESL 1 (SD)	ESL 1 (CE)	ESL 1 (GM)	ESL 1 (JT)	ESL 2 (GD)	ESL 2 (RQ)	ESL 2 (YA)
gen math (sh)	gen math (sh)	ESL 1	ESL Pre-Read	gen math (sh)	reading 1-1	ESL reading
ESL 1	ESL 1	ESL Pre-Read	ESL 1	US hist (sh)	art color	PE
Span/Span (P)	Span/Span (P)	ESL LifeSkill	PE	PE	biology (sh)(P)	Span/Span
PE	ESL Pre-Read	US hist (sh)	US hist (sh)	ESL 2	PE	ESL 2
ESL LifeSkill	ESL LifeSkill	art color	gen math (sh)	ESL reading	ESL 2	cons. math
ESL Pre-Read	athletics	biology (sh)(P)	ESL LifeSkill	biology (sh)(P)	gen math	art color

ESL 3 (ME)	ESL 3 (AN)	ESL 3 (BT)	"P-ESL"(AE)	"P-ESL"(CM)	"P-ESL"(MN)	"P-ESL" (RF)
Span/Span (P)	PE	life science	algebra 2 (P)	Eng 3 (P)	earth science	chemistry (P)
typing 2	US hist (sh)	health science	ESL aide	watercolor	art structure	trig/analyt (H)
biology (sh)(P)	biology (sh)(P)	PE	biology (sh)(P)	typing 1	PE	AP Eng (H)
US hist (sh)	phys science	math A	US hist (sh)	US hist (sh)	US hist (sh)	AP govt (H)
ESL 3 (P)	algebra 1 (P)	government (B)	ESL 3 (B)	office asst	Eng 3 (R)	physics (P)
economics (B)	ESL 3 (P)	ESL 3 (P)	computer appl	earth science	adv mixed choir	athletics
retail sales						

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Data Collection

I worked with groups of three to four students, concentrating on students in one English "level" at a time. This enabled me, for example, to spend a period of three weeks, four days each week, looking at the campus and classes through the eyes of beginning ESL students. I started in the first week of October of 1990 with ESL 1 students and ended in January of 1991 with participants in "regular" English classes. I interviewed all students at a particular level during a one to two day period. I "shadowed" each interviewee for two days to all of his or her classes and activities. Re-interviews took place after all classroom observations for that level were completed.

After selecting informants as described above, I contacted them informally to ask if they were interested in talking to me. Reactions varied from a smile and a nod to a polite request for a better idea of what was involved. With teachers' permissions, all interviews were conducted during class time. Students were taken out of English classes except where scheduling or academic conflicts existed.

All students chose to be interviewed in Spanish and agreed to having interviews audiotaped. Several of them who had been in the U.S. for more than a year expressed some hesitation over the choice of languages. At the intermediate level, for example, one interviewee said, "I should probably do it in English because it would be good practice, but Spanish is so much easier." At the advanced level, a student said, "I could do some of it in English, but I am more comfortable in Spanish." Even the students in "regular" English classes were unanimous in deciding that they could express themselves more fully in Spanish. The student in honors English who had been in California for six years put it this way, "I have no trouble with any kind of technical English, but I still can talk about my emotions better in Spanish."

The first interview was conducted in one of the school's small, private administrative offices. All others took place in a teachers' lounge that was generally used only during lunchtime. This large, high-ceilinged room offered comfortable couches and a relaxed, informal atmosphere for discussion. The only disruptions occurred when interviews took place the period before lunch and discussions were cut short as teachers entered the room to eat. I attempted not to take advantage of teachers' good-natured attitude toward our use of their space. Students' voices and bells that signal the end of a class period can be heard at the end of every interview.

A typical first session involved an explanation of my project and a request for the student's participation as co-researcher. They understood that if they agreed, they would be interviewed twice during school time and that I would accompany them to all of their classes for two days. Each participant was asked to keep a language log during the time between the two interviews (see Appendix C for a copy of a language log). At the first session I also announced that I would be happy to be invited to eat my bag lunch with them and their friends and to talk to them between classes. All of the students contacted acted pleased to have been chosen as participants. They understood that at any time they could decide to stop participating. Both they and their parents signed permission slips, written in Spanish, agreeing to participate in the research project (see Appendix D for a copy of the parent and student participation agreement).

After agreeing to participate, each student filled out a one-page questionnaire, written in Spanish, requesting personal and family biographical data with an emphasis on educational experiences. We discussed the questions as they completed the questionnaire. I took additional notes since they often shared more information orally than they actually wrote on the questionnaire. This ten to fifteen minute period acted as an ice-breaker and served as an entry point into the tape-recorded portion of the interview which lasted up to forty minutes.

As in the pilot study, the format of the interviews was semi-structured. The same five questions were asked during the discussions, but informants were encouraged to talk about what was important to them about their study and use of English. For example, a football player discussed his difficulties understanding English in the locker room and communicating on the playing field; a new arrival with no background in English explained how he used newspaper ads to learn key vocabulary; an aspiring dance student described her disappointment at failing a dance class because she could not understand the tests in English and was shunned by Mexican American girls who refused to help her in either Spanish or English.

Second interviews took place after the observations for each "level" were completed. Students were given transcriptions of their first interviews to read and amend as necessary. They were asked to validate the accuracy of the transcription and encouraged to modify their statements in any way. If there had been any unintelligible words or phrases on the audiotape, we relistened to those sections to their satisfaction. Meaning was negotiated and clarified in the process of explaining to me what they had intended to say. For example, Cecilia said during an interview, "I hardly ever speak Spanish with my teacher..." While reading the transcriptions, she changed the word 'Spanish' to 'English.' We relistened to that part of the tape, determined that she had said 'Spanish' when she assured me she had intended to say 'English.' On another occasion, Raúl acknowledged that he did not remember what he was referring to when he talked about the use of foul language in an English class. We relistened to the tape which he said was accurately transcribed. Since he said his comments were unimportant, I disregarded them.

Second interviews were often filled with discussions of experiences that students and I had shared. Whereas first interviews explored general language background and use, second meetings were more likely to "fine-tune" details and distinctions.

Students were told in advance which days I would be visiting classes with them. All of their teachers were sent letters explaining my research, announcing days I wanted to visit their classes, and asking them to contact me if this was not convenient (see Appendix E for a copy of this follow-up note). I was welcomed in all classes by all teachers except in cases where they knew they would be absent from school on the day indicated. I visited classes taught by forty different teachers at Capital High in the following departments:

Foreign Language/ESL, English, Math, Performing Arts, Physical Education, Art, Business, Science, and Social Studies. As indicated, comments made by some of these teachers have been included in the report of the findings.

I obtained students' class schedules only after having selected them as participants. Since many of them took the same sheltered content classes, I returned to several teachers' classrooms with as many as seven different students. This gave me an opportunity to gain a view of participants' experiences over a period of time. It also enabled me to observe and discuss different students' reactions to the same presentations, events, and activities in a particular classroom. Most classes were visited twice which allowed me to observe the personal and classroom communication patterns that students described in the first interview. These shared language experiences also provided the basis for further discussions in the follow-up interview.

I transcribed all interviews myself. Although it was a laborious, time-consuming process, I found that it was worth the effort since it required me to focus on informants' statements more intently than was possible during the original interview when I was also concerned with observing students' reactions and framing follow-up questions. When I began the process of formal analysis of each interview I was already intimately acquainted with its contents.

Data Analysis

Over 400 pages of transcriptions from 34 interviews with 14 students were analyzed using the previously described constant comparative method of data analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). I coded all statements with meaning indicators (see Appendix F for a sample page of a coded interview). These meaning indicators were then analyzed in relation to the themes, categories, and properties that had been tentatively established during the pilot interviews with Mexican students at Capital High. Continual analysis made it necessary to expand or collapse categories to fit incoming data. One theme was added to include students' statements and experiences that did not fit into themes established for the pilot study: "Educational and Institutional Factors That Influence Students' Use and Acquisition of English."

Using a structure of established themes, categories, and properties, I went through interviews again to translate quotations into English that supported each of the categories and properties. These quotations were typed onto outlines of categories and properties. I used a cross-referencing system for quotations that "fit" under more than one category. Data included, therefore, approximately 70 pages of quotations supporting themes, categories, and properties for each of the four English levels studied. As I reread interviews I continued to make adjustments and changes in their analyses. Some categories became "saturated" as different students repeated similar perceptions or experiences. I noted possible relationships between categories and themes when making final analyses.

About 450 pages of field notes from 175 hours of classroom observations and more than 75 hours of out-of-class contacts were analyzed according to the same process described for transcripted nterviews.

I analyzed interview transcripts and field notes from groups of students at each English level separately so that I could note possible similarities or differences based on placement in English classes. This provided interesting distinctions since some categories were saturated, for example, by beginning students and not used at all by more advanced ones.

A colleague familiar with qualitative research techniques acted as auditor for data generated from transcripted interviews and field notes. Six members of a dissertation support group acted as peer reviewers by providing methodological suggestions and giving feedback on theoretical issues.

Feedback to Co-researchers and School Staff

Many of the informants expressed an interest in learning about the findings of this study. Once preliminary analysis of the data was completed I invited all of them to meet with me in a conference room at Capital High. For about an hour, eight of the fourteen co-researchers listened to my presentation of the findings, asked questions, and clarified several points. During the next hour, they broke into smaller groups and discussed additional suggestions for improving language programs and instruction at Capital High. Three students then shared their groups' ideas with the other co-researchers. These suggestions were incorporated into the report of the findings in Chapter 8.

Co-researchers told me they were happy that I planned to present their suggestions to teachers and administrators at Capital High. They said they were anxious for the discussions to continue at a later date although no time for this was established. They said that they hoped this study would provide a vehicle for opening channels of communication for immigrant students on campus who felt very isolated from school programs and activities.

I invited 45 participating teachers and administrators to meetings held the week after my get-together with co-researchers. Seven staff members attended these sessions which I offered at two different times to accommodate their busy schedules. The feedback from two administrators and five teachers at these formal sessions validated my report of the findings. Since those attending were among those most concerned about the ESL students on campus, they indicated that they were already aware of some of the issues that I raised. In several cases, they had already begun the process of looking for ways to meet the expressed needs of co-researchers. They said that they welcomed these sessions as a way to discuss the linguistic, social, and academic experiences of language minority students at Capital High.

Summary Timeline for the Study

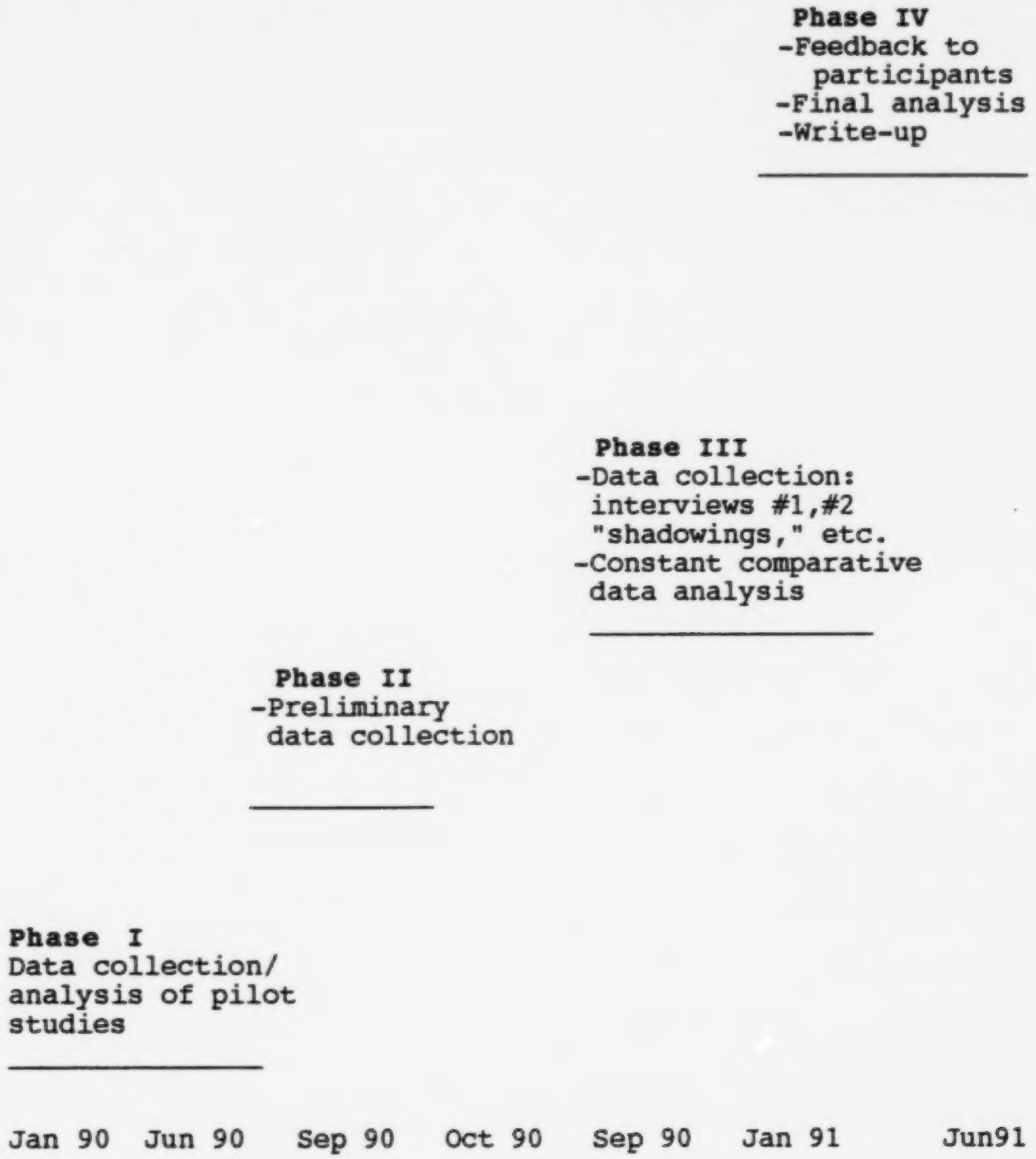
Phase 1: I chose sites and participants for pilot studies at two different high schools. Data collection included two interviews (with feedback loops) with each of six participants at each site. Emerging themes, categories, and properties were analyzed. A final report of the pilot study was written for site #1, Capital High.

Phase 2: Capital High was selected as the site for the study. I contacted administrators and teachers who recommended participants and approved my general classroom observations.

Phase 3: I contacted students at each of four different levels of English proficiency who agreed to act as co-researchers. I conducted interviews and "shadowed" each of them for two days, as a participant observer. Emerging categories and properties were compared to those from the pilot study. Some were collapsed; others became saturated. A theme was added to fit incoming data. Field work became increasingly focused.

Phase 4: I continued the constant comparative process of analyzing completely transcribed interviews and field notes. Findings were discussed with co-researchers and interested teachers. The final report of the findings was written using selected quotations as support for established themes, categories, and properties.

Figure 8: Timeline of the study (chart form).



Phase IV
-Feedback to participants
-Final analysis
-Write-up

Phase III
-Data collection: interviews #1,#2 "shadowings," etc.
-Constant comparative data analysis

Phase II
-Preliminary data collection

Phase I
Data collection/ analysis of pilot studies

Jan 90 Jun 90 Sep 90 Oct 90 Sep 90 Jan 91 Jun91

Format of the Report of the Findings

Each of the major themes that emerged from this study is presented in a separate chapter. A list of the sub-themes, categories, and properties which defined these themes is included at the beginning of each chapter and serves as the organizing structure for the presentation and discussion of findings. Each chapter concludes with a summary of the findings related to that theme.

Quotations from interviews, as well as narrative descriptions and quotations from students and teachers recorded in field notes are used as the primary sources of supporting data.

Each quotation from an interview is identified with initials of the interviewee, as well as the interview number and the page number of the transcribed interview. The notation (RQ, I2, 20), for example, indicates that the quote was taken from a second interview with Raúl Quintana that was recorded on page twenty of the transcript.

Data supported by field note entries is identified by date and page number. The notation (10-14-90, 16) indicates that the information was recorded on page 16 of the field notes taken on October 14, 1990.

The confidentiality of all teachers and students who participated in this research has been maintained through the use of pseudonyms. The name of the school itself has also been changed.

Summary of the Findings

Categories were organized around the following four themes during data analysis:

1) What Students Say About Themselves as Learners of English as a Second Language
2) Students' Current Use of English
3) Educational and Institutional Factors that Influence Students' Use and Acquisition of English
4) Students' Suggestions for the Improvement of English Language Acquisition and Teaching

Figure 9 gives an overview of the themes, sub-themes, categories, and properties that emerged from the data. This outline is important because it summarizes the findings of my study.

Figure 9. Summary of themes, sub-themes, categories and properties.

THEME 1: WHAT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THEMSELVES AS LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

A. GENERAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND AND PROFICIENCY

1. Differences in formal English classes in Mexico
2. Differences in "exposure" to English in Mexico
3. No English proficiency upon arrival in U.S.

B. REASONS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

1. Personal goals
    - a. To speak English well
    - b. To become educated in U.S.
        - i. Succeed in current classes
        - ii. Finish high school/adult school
        - iii. Continue education after high school
    - c. To have more and better job choices
    - d. To make financial gains
        - i. Help family
        - ii. Buy "things"
2. Family values
    - a. Children have moral and financial obligation to family
    - b. Families value education and English
    - c. Families allow children to choose course of study/career/job
    - d. Few families encourage high-status, professional careers
    - e. Some families have gender-based expectations for children

C. PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS WITH ENGLISH

1. Progress and problems understanding spoken English
    - a. Progress in understanding monolingual Americans
    - b. Insufficient visual cues from teachers
    - c. Rate of speech unmodified by native speakers
    - d. Comprehension limited by English vocabulary and conceptual understanding
2. Progress and problems speaking English
    - a. Frustration over slow improvement in speaking proficiency
    - b. Pronunciation impedes communication and causes embarrassment
    - c. Limited acquisition of language structures
    - d. Limited need or "pressure" to speak English
    - e. Inability to speak at "normal" speed
3. Progress and problems reading English
    - a. Confusion between oral reading and silent reading
    - b. Limited understanding and recall of over-all meaning and isolated vocabulary
    - c. Inability to function academically with reading as main instructional strategy
    - d. Insufficient time allotted for reading
4. Progress and problems writing English
    - a. Unaccustomed to cursive writing

   - b. Problems with spelling and language structures
   - c. Expression limited by English vocabulary
   - d. Questioned importance and usefulness of writing topics
   - e. Concerned with discourse patterns
   - f. Constrained by time limits

D. LEARNING STRATEGIES

1. Consulting classmates
   - a. Asking classmates to explain class content, procedures, and English
   - b. Asking classmates to copy their written work
2. Contacting teachers
   - a. Asking teachers to model pronunciation and spelling
   - b. Asking teachers to give definitions and labels
   - c. Asking teachers to give examples, explanations, and verifications
   - d. Asking teachers for help before or after class
   - e. Asking teachers to change teaching methods
3. Contacting aides
   - a. Asking aides to explain class content and procedures
4. Self-help in class
   - a. Watching and listening carefully to teacher
   - b. Taking notes from teachers' presentations
   - c. Using texts and dictionaries
5. Self-help out of class
   - a. Using dictionaries
   - b. Doing extra reading and writing in English
   - c. Getting help from family members
   - d. Studying "until it sticks"

THEME 2: WHAT IMMIGRANT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THEIR CURRENT USE OF ENGLISH

A. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH IN THE COMMUNITY

1. Students' use of English with neighbors
   - a. No contacts in English
   - b. Relations sometimes strained
   - c. Limited to extensive contacts in Spanish
2. Students' use of English in stores
   - a. Sometimes use Spanish
   - b. Sometimes use English
3. Students' use of English for medical and public services: Always use English

B. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT WORK

1. Students' use of English with bosses
   - a. Often use English if bosses are bilingual
   - b. Sometimes use Spanish if bosses are bilingual
2. Students' use of English with co-workers
   - a. Rarely use English if co-workers are bilingual

   b. Most often use Spanish if co-workers are bilingual

3. Students' use of English with customers
   a. Sometimes use English if customers are bilingual
   b. Sometimes use Spanish if customers are bilingual

C. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT HOME

1. Students' use of English with parents, aunts, uncles
   a. Most often use Spanish
   b. Rarely use English
2. Students' use of English with siblings and cousins
   a. Often use Spanish
   b. Sometimes use English
3. Students' use of English with reading materials and TV
   a. Both English and Spanish TV programs watched
   b. Reading materials in both English and Spanish often limited
4. Students' use of English for correspondence and phone calls
   a. Most often use English
   b. Sometimes use Spanish

D. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT SCHOOL

1. Students' use of English with students from Spanish-speaking countries
   a. Students' use of English for academic purposes
      i. Most often use Spanish
      ii. Rarely use English
         -Except in highly structured activities
         -Except for common expressions
         -Except in classes with many native speakers of English
   b. Students' use of English for social purposes
      i. Most often use Spanish
      ii. Sometimes mix Spanish and English
      iii. A few individuals try to communicate in English
   c. Students' problem communicating in English: Often teased
2. Students' use of English with Mexican Americans
   a. Students' use of English for academic and social purposes
      i. Most often speak Spanish
      ii. Speak English with non-Spanish speakers
      iii. Relations often unfriendly
3. Students' use of English with students from non-Spanish-speaking countries
   a. Students' use of English for academic purposes: Limited communication in English
   b. Students' use of English for social purposes
      i. Limited to extensive communication in English
      ii. Limited communication in Spanish
   c. Benefits and problems communicating w/non-native English speakers
4. Students' use of English with monolingual American students
   a. No opportunity for contacts in ESL/sheltered content classes
   b. Limited contacts in regular classes
      i. Because of traditional teaching methodologies
      ii. Because of students' ethnic grouping patterns
   c. Limited contacts through individual initiative or school activities
   d. Successful contacts through football and soccer programs

- e. Benefits and problems communicating with monolingual Americans

5. Students' use of English with teachers
    - a. Students' use of English for academic purposes
        - i. Most often use English with monolingual teachers
        - ii. Sometimes use interpreters with monolingual teachers
        - iii. Consistently use Spanish with some bilingual teachers
    - b. Students' use of English for social purposes
        - i. Limited contacts in English with some monolingual teachers
        - ii. Limited contacts in Spanish with some bilingual teachers
6. Students' use of English with aides: Most often use Spanish with bilingual aides
7. Students' use of English with counselors
    - a. Most often use Spanish with bilingual counselors
    - b. Often fear miscommunication with monolingual counselors

THEME 3: WHAT IMMIGRANT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT EDUCATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT THEIR USE AND ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH

A. INAPPROPRIATE CLASS PLACEMENTS

1. Evidenced by students' incomprehension or boredom
2. Resulted from inaccurate tests, biased tracking systems
3. Resulted in low English usage, low self-esteem, and poor academic preparation for further studies

B. STUDENTS' CURRICULAR CONCERNS

1. Lack of coordinated themes to organize class content
2. Need to acquire practical vocabulary and language functions
3. Insufficient attention to personal connections, cultural similarities and differences
4. Need to understand and discuss complex issues

C. STUDENTS' OPINIONS OF TEACHERS' INPUT AND METHODOLOGIES

1. Students' opinions of how teachers make classroom input comprehensible
    - a. How teachers make input comprehensible in ESL classes
    - b. How teachers make input comprehensible in sheltered content classes
    - c. How teachers make input comprehensible in "regular" classes
2. Students opinions of how they become involved in classroom activities
    - a. How students participate as individuals
        - i. Building on *ganas* and effort
        - ii. Student-initiated methodology
    - b. How students participate in large groups
        - i. Verbal participation
        - ii. Non-verbal participation
    - c. How students participate in small groups

D. STUDENTS' OPINIONS OF TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS

1. Students' opinions of teachers' attitudes toward students

- a. Students respond best to respect
- b. Students respond best to high standards

2. Students' opinions of classroom discipline
3. Students' opinions of teacher-determined language choice in classrooms
   - a. Students' views of teachers' attitudes towards language
   - b. Students' views of teachers' language choice
   - c. Students' views of teachers' policies for students' language choice in classrooms

THEME 4: IMMIGRANT STUDENTS'SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND TEACHING

A. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT

1. Students need to hear and use more English
   - a. Students need to work harder in class
   - b. Students need to use English outside of class
2. Students need to change classes
   - a. Students should take academically challenging classes
   - b. Students should be in more classes with English speakers
3. Students need to stay in ESL and sheltered content classes

B. INTERVIEWEES' ADVICE TO NEW IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

1. New immigrant students need *ganas* and effort
   - a. New immigrant students should prove themselves as Mexicans
   - b. New immigrant students should study hard and try to communicate
   - c. New immigrant students should not become easily discouraged
2. New immigrant students need to find many different ways to learn English
   - a. New immigrant students should take ESL classes
   - b. New immigrant students should make friends and practice English
   - c. New immigrant students should "collect" new words: listen/watch/ask/read/write
   - d. New immigrant students should participate in school activities

C. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. Teachers/schools should organize curriculum around themes that are important and interesting: Teachers should listen to students' suggestions about what they need and want to study
2. Teachers should use many teaching methods
   - a. Teachers should encourage students to investigate, experiment, and discuss
   - b. Teachers should use a variety of strategies and materials so that students understand lessons and do not get bored
   - c. Teachers should provide sufficient time for students' work
3. Teachers' should use English most of the time
   - a. All teachers should speak English in classes
     - i. Teachers should simplify language and speak slowly
     - ii. Teachers should explain *and* model English usage
   - b. Content teachers should allow/encourage students to use Spanish to gain conceptual understanding

        - c. Content teachers should enable students to use English for academic purposes
    4. Teachers should have high expectations for all students
        - a. Teachers should "pressure" students to use English
        - b. Teachers should not pace class to those who do not work
        - c. Teachers should maintain a disciplined, not strict, learning environment

D. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SCHOOL

1. Schools should provide academic support
    - a. Schools should provide appropriate placement in classes
    - b. Schools should provide verification of linguistic and academic progress
2. Schools should provide material support
    - a. Students need texts they can take home from each class
    - b. Teachers need equipment, materials to make lessons clearer
3. Schools should provide extracurricular support
    - a. Schools should assure equal access to existing extracurricular activities
    - b. Schools should consult with students in formation of new activities
4. Schools should provide information about scholarships
5. Schools should provide open channels of communication for all students

Chapter 4

VERBAL PORTRAITS OF CO-RESEARCHERS

Before presenting and analyzing the linguistic experiences of the fourteen young people who acted as co-researchers, I will introduce them through verbal portraits. As described in Tikunoff & Ward (1991), verbal portraits are impressionistic; they make use "of details and mental associations to inspire subjective and sensory impressions rather than the re-creation of objective reality" (Webster's II New Riverside University Dictionary). Perhaps parts of these descriptions will remind readers of students they know.

Samuel Duarte (ESL 1)

My name is Samuel, but my teachers call me "Sam-you-al." Funny thing, when I talk about things that happen in class, I call myself "Sam-you-al," too.

I am *mestizo,* but I look more like my Spanish than my Indian ancestors. I don't stand above my *compañeros* in a crowd. My thick head of curly, short-cropped hair starts only inches from my eyebrows. My mustache makes me look like a man, but it's not easy to see that I worked hard as a fisherman in our village for five years before my father brought me back to California where I was born.

My father is very proud. He wants me to get good grades. He hopes his back will be well enough for him to drive a truck again soon.

I usually just eat fruit for lunch. My friends told me how to get lunch tickets. I haven't tried to get them yet.

I am careful to dress like other young people in this school. I don't think anyone has noticed that I have worn the same jeans, blue and grey striped knit shirt and Cons high-top gym shoes to school for the past two days.

Pens and erasers, carried in my black waist pack, have replaced fish nets and poles in my life. I need letters and words--English words. I need lists to copy and memorize. Why are signs filled with words that I don't understand? "No shoes allowed on gym floor!" "*¿Qué significa* floor?"

"Teacher, come on." I want to erase what isn't right. Mistakes mean bad grades. I need to learn English now.

I wish I had learned more in Mexico. In elementary school they didn't teach us about the difference between sentences and phrases. They showed us how to print, not how to write in cursive. My teachers say these things are important. I never heard about decimal points, either, but my P.E. teacher says I can run fast. I am proud to be picked to run the relays. Maybe someday I will be on the track team.

I reach for an orange Halloween balloon. I grin when I don't get one. I shadow box my *compañero* on the way to class. I lower my eyes when my mouth doesn't move right in English. I hear my friends laugh.

I want to do more. "Teacher, come on." I want to learn English now.

Claudio Estrada (ESL 1)

I learned some *groserías* in English on the streets of Mexico City before coming here. Doesn't everyone learn the bad words first? I miss going around with my friends in Mexico. Here in California you need cars to do anything, and I don't have a car. I learned a lot from the guys in my new neighborhood before I started school at Capital High.

There is some graffiti written on my backpack. I hang out with the *Cholos* at night when I'm not in training. I like their cars, their ways with girls, their parties. I like to fight, but I think that killing is wrong. I don't use drugs, either.

School bores me, except for football. It was easy to make the team because I'm big and tall. The coach says I would be on the varsity instead of the j-v team if all of my school papers from Mexico were here.

I like my hair buzzed on the sides and squared off in back with the top gelled high. I'm comfortable in T-shirts, jeans, and Fila high-tops. I like to wear my navy-colored ski-vest in air-conditioned class rooms.

I answer in class, but teachers only pay attention to those who don't understand. My ESL teacher tried to give me some extra work and attention, but I don't see why I should do more work than I have to.

Everything is too easy. I finish most of my work in school. Why bring it home? I studied this math in sixth grade. I already know about Spanish accent marks and spelling. Nobody cares about them in Mexico anyway. I want to learn about computer programming and police work. I would rather be in a class with *gabachos*, Americans, because then you have to really listen to them speak English. When my coach talks, I get as close as I can so that I don't miss a word.

My father thinks that sports are a waste of time, but a friend warned him that they are better than gangs. He lets me train with my team at night and during the summer. He pulled me out of a private junior high school in Mexico for fooling around with girls. I came from Mexico to be with my Dad. He and my Mom are divorced.

Of course I speak Spanish with my *compañeros.* They laugh when I speak English. I like being on the team and talking English with my new friends while we eat pizza.

I want to study computers now. Why won't they let me?

Gabriela Miranda (ESL 1)

My teacher couldn't believe it when I got an A on a hard history test in English. I told him I had really studied, but he asked me lots of questions in Spanish about the material before he smiled and said I was smart.

That happened six weeks ago--right after I got to Capital High. I don't see that I did anything special. I copied all the words the teacher wrote on the blackboard. When I got home I asked my cousins to help me translate them at home so I could study them in Spanish and then memorize the English words. I had to study more than this to graduate from high school in Mexico.

I never say anything in class. My friends help me a lot. They talk, and I listen. Sometimes they tease me. Boy did I blush today when they told me that the blond kid wants to be my boyfriend.

My black, curly, shoulder-length hair is held back with combs. I spend a lot of time putting on a touch of make-up. I like to wear pastel-colored shirts with dark skirts. White socks and laced patent-leather shoes usually complete my school outfits.

My eyes sparkle with friendliness, but I am uncomfortable around people I don't know. I heard one of my teachers say that I am an elegant child, whatever that means.

I think I'm pretty used to American life after six weeks, but I like to do things my way and slowly. I get tired very easily. That's why I don't play sports.

Life here is different from the way it is in the movies--very different. I like American things. Did you see the picture of Garfield I drew in art class?

I don't speak much English anywhere. I'm so happy that there are aides who can help me in Spanish in three of my classes. I only go shopping with my family--my aunt, uncle and cousins--who have lived in California a long time. I wouldn't talk to neighbors.

My mother who's still in Mexico wants me to be a teacher, but I'm too shy. Maybe someday I'll be able to talk. I'm afraid people won't understand the way I pronounce or use words. Maybe someday.

José Torres (ESL 1)

I'm lucky that my Dad owns a shoe factory in Mexico. The uncle I'm living with is pretty well off, too. It's nice not to have to get a job while I'm going to school. I'm kind of here to study English which I never had a chance to do in Guanajuato.

When I first got to Capital High last year it was really hard for me. This year isn't much better. They put me in a history class because I'm seventeen years old. I can't understand the book or the teacher when he speaks English.

My Dad gives me money to buy nice clothes. I always wear dress shirts, pleated pants, and leather shoes. I'm careful that my hair is always slicked back in place.

My round face breaks into a smile when my teacher tells me to stop looking at my friend's paper. What should I do when I can't do it by myself. We have to help each other. I know some kids laugh at me behind my back. I can tell that some of my teachers think I'm making trouble in their classes.

Yesterday I helped a friend work on his car. That's what I want--my own car. I'm going to get one someday. Maybe I'll have a business like my Dad. I don't want to go back to Mexico. Maybe I'll get my diploma in night school.

Raúl Quintana (ESL 2)

I bounce confidently when I walk. I like to walk backwards so I can face the people I'm talking to and motion to friends as they pass by. My mustached smile matches the twinkle in my eye. My humor spans two languages, and I pride myself on its effect in any setting. Remind me to I tell you the story about the flag my favorite ESL teacher thinks I took from her class. We still laugh about that one.

Teachers and students know that I can take care of myself in English. "Yes, Raúl," my math teacher said yesterday. "I guess you're right. Those aren't the answers to the homework problems. You're the only one who noticed."

Some of my best friends are pretty girls. They come to me with their stories, their jackets, and their candy. I have fun speaking English with them since many of them have lived in California since they were little. Do you see Julia over there? She and I are going to walk over to her friend's house after school with some birthday flowers.

I often dress in pleated pants, long-sleeved dress shirts and high-topped tennis shoes. I don't like to carry a lot of books around with me.

I "get by" in most of my classes. I don't like to suit up in P.E.; I just shoot hoops. In art class my friends and I mix Spanish and English and have fun talking while we work on our projects. Math is kind of boring, and so is reading. I know how to study and do my homework. My biology teacher treats me as if I'm smart, and my friends and I really understand things in there.

I haven't seen my parents in over a year. It's hard when I can't tell them about my life right now. I send money back to them and support myself here. It's hard living with my aunt and uncle. Well, actually I had three aunts in California. One of them just returned to Mexico. None of them believes me when I tell them I am at school.

My future is a question mark. My parents want me to stay here and work. I don't want to go back to Mexico. I want to stay in school, but who knows what I will do later. I love to cut classes and have fun with my friends. I am ready to fly, but I don't know where.

Yolanda Aguilar (ESL 2)

I am a perfectionist. My handwriting is controlled; my artwork is precise. Watch me count carefully to myself as I do my jump-rope and balance beam routines in PE class.

My long, straight black hair bounces happily behind me. My black leotard and tights reveal the slim, petite frame of a natural gymnast who has had little training or experience. I listen to directions; I work. I smile shyly as my teacher nods her approval. I don't like to ask questions.

I am quiet. I listen, and I work, but I have opinions. Just ask me. The words come tumbling out for anyone who stops to ask or listen.

I told my parents that I want to keep studying. My father gave me worksheets from his night class so I that could do extra work in English. I'm getting worried. English words don't "stick" even when I look them up in the dictionary. Next time I see them I think, "I should know this word, but I can't remember what it means." I'm getting worried about ever being able to really use English.

I think I'd like to be a kindergarten teacher, but I don't know if I can do it or how long it would take. They keep raising the rent on us. We live with my aunt now until my Dad can figure out what to do. I want to get a job to help my family, but my papers aren't in order. My Mom has problems with her eye and wants to move back to Mexico. She says the doctors here can't help her. I really miss my grandmother. I wouldn't mind it if we all moved back to Mexico.

Before I came to California everyone told me I'd find really big stores where I could buy everything I wanted. Well, the stores are bigger than those in Mexico, but they're not as big as I thought they'd be. I don't have the money to buy what I want anyway. Maybe I can find everything I need and want back home.

Gabriel Delgado (ESL 2)

I wish I had more control over my life. I know what I want to do, but I don't know if anyone will let me try to do it.

This year is better at Capital High. Last year nothing moved fast enough for me. Teachers just gave us hand-outs and paid attention to those who didn't study. They taught us words, only words, but never how to use them.

This year I have three teachers who make me think--who let me ask questions. I need to understand things. Please don't make me copy sentences I don't understand. There are so many important things to study. Why can't we study them?

My girlfriend's smart, too. She's another reason I like this year better than last year. People say we make a good-looking couple. We both have smiles that make people comfortable.

I'm fairly tall, with wavy black hair that stays in place without being slicked back. I usually just wear jeans, knit shirts with collars, and Nike high-top tennis shoes. I buy my own clothes.

My family has only been in California for a little over a year. I have to work to help out. My best friend in the world is the Italian woman who is my boss at the pizza place. I can really talk to her--in English. She lets me study when I have to.

I wish my Mother weren't so sick. I've been missing a lot of school lately because she needs me to be with her when she goes to see the doctor. It's hard for her because she can't speak English. I do what I can.

I'm worried I will never be able to do what I want to do. I wanted to study computers last year but they told me my English wasn't good enough. My favorite part of the school day is going to the computer lab during math class. My dream is to work with computers. My dream is to go to the university.

Margarita Delacruz (ESL 3)

My friends say I am *chaparrita*--short and solid. I think before I speak and speak from my heart. My smile extends to my eyes and folds them into slits. I don't wear make-up. I speak softly, but my friends listen.

In class I pay attention and don't ask questions unless I think they're necessary. Some people talk just to hear themselves. My teachers know I understand. I get the work done. I help my friends who don't understand English and who have trouble reading.

I can't figure out why students don't take advantage of opportunities here at Capital High. When I heard about the ROP program I signed up because I knew I would learn how to work in a store. I knew I wouldn't get paid, but I knew I would be learning. You have to start somewhere. My brother bought me a grey jacket that was on sale at my store. It's my favorite thing to wear.

I'm thinking of going back to Mexico and working in the hotel business after I graduate. We have a lot of tourists in Guanajuato. Maybe I'll be a teacher. My brother is a teacher in Mexico right now. He was pretty hard on me when I was little, making sure that I studied and all that. I feel really close to my family.

All of us, except my brother, live in California. I love to watch cartoons with my little nieces and nephews. I tell them, "When I first came here I didn't understand why everyone was laughing. Now I can laugh, too."

My mother taught my father how to read because he never got to go to school. They have always wanted their children to study and have paid for all of the schooling they could afford. One of my brothers who didn't go on after the *secundaria* told me that he made a big mistake.

I'm going to learn English and help my parents by getting a good job.

Bárbara Trujillo (ESL 3)

When I was in Mexico, my father wanted me to be a doctor. I wanted to be a lawyer. I have a knack for looking below the surface of things, looking deep to see what's really there. I choose my words carefully, but I do not hesitate to speak my mind. Smiles come slowly to my face as I weigh my reaction to the outside world. There is too much to learn about at one time in this country. I don't think I will be able to understand things well enough to study law here.

Life has not been easy for my family since we moved to California. I am the oldest of the children still at home. We went to Fresno for awhile. That's where one of my older brothers lives. It didn't work out so we moved back here, but my parents still can't find jobs. I have two part-time jobs: one as a receptionist, another as a waitress. It's hard to do my school work, but I manage.

I'm sure my teachers don't notice me. Everything happens too fast in class for me to get words out in English. I can only understand if they speak slowly.

I'm hoping my grades will be good enough to graduate in June. I'm really worried about passing my math class. At first, my counselor didn't seem to know exactly which courses I needed to finish up, but I think that's all arranged now. I'll probably go to the nearby community college. It's the only chance I have to stay in school.

My "permed" hair falls halfway down my back. My lipstick is carefully matched to the pink sweatshirt, grey jeans and black suede flats that I'm wearing today. I may look like a young student, but I can handle myself. I am going to make it.

Antonio Navarro (ESL 3)

Let me sign my name for you. I think signatures should say a lot about a person--mine does. Do you see that "10" that's written below the words you can't read? That number tells what my grades were in Mexico. Ten is the highest you can get. Look to the right of the words. I drew *palomitas*, little doves, flying in the air to represent the girls that I watch. Nobody can figure out why I don't have a girlfriend yet. The number "15" below the little doves tells my age. I am younger than most of the *compañeros* in my classes. Nobody can copy my signature.

I came to California to live with my aunt and send money back to my family in Mexico. I didn't really want to come; I thought I was going to join the Mexican army. My father said that I should come here instead because they would send me far from home in the army. I don't see the difference; I'm far from home anyway.

I miss my family. Nobody here cares that I study and get good grades. Nobody here talks to me at night or makes me feel at home. I never go into my aunt's room where they keep the television.

I do my own ironing. I only have three pairs of pants and a few shirts. My red and black sweater keeps me warm on cooler days.

It's hard to work and study. It's not easy to find time. I worry about not getting all As. I'm using this book to help me get ready to take the SAT exam. I think I can do well in a university if I can get into one.

I'm short, slim, and serious-looking. Listen carefully because my humor is clever and subtle. Friends are important to me.

Adriana Escobar ("Post ESL")

My hair reaches to the middle of my back. It's brown with red highlights, all crimped and curly. My smile lights up my brown eyes, and my freckles set me apart from my *compañeras*. I dress in warm colors--orange, gold, red. Today I'm wearing a bright pink Mickey Mouse T-shirt, boot-cut jeans, and pink L.A. Gears with grey metallic laces.

I love to dance; I want to be a cheerleader. I've wanted to do that since I first saw them twirling around during the rallies, but I knew my English wasn't good enough to talk to all of the blonde girls. This year my Mom convinced my Dad that it would be okay for me to try out. I am going to get a part-time job to pay for cheerleading uniforms.

When I was in Mexico, I thought that nobody in California spoke Spanish. I thought I would be the only one. I found out I was wrong when I started school. During my first year at Capital High I stayed with my friends because they could help me in Spanish.

Now, I have some friends who don't speak Spanish. I choose my friends for the way they think. If they have "bigger" ideas, they help me grow as a person. I don't know many *gabachos*, but I eat lunch and hang out with a special Indonesian friend. Last year a Vietnamese girl and I were always talking to one another. My friends and I understand each other.

My parents came here to find a better life for me and my sisters. They want us to study and have a better future. We live about a mile or so from school in a pink stucco house with pretty flowers in front. My mother likes flowers.

I want to study dance or computers. They seem like my best choices. I just wish my English would get better.

I don't like my English class this year, but that's the way it is. I can't change it. The work is too easy, but I belong in this class. Last year in ESL 3, I followed directions, but I couldn't remember what I read. It didn't stick. I reread the stories and tried to make sense of them, but I couldn't pass tests because didn't understand. I guess I'm not too smart in English.

I try, but I don't think my teachers notice me because I get very nervous talking to Americans. Oh yes, I just found out that I won't be a cheerleader my senior year, after all. I didn't understand about a deadline. They disqualified me. The school will have lots of blonde cheerleaders again.

Ramón Flores ("Post ESL")

I am tall, almost six foot. My wire-rimmed glasses make me look like the thinker that I am. My hair is wavy, not too long. Today I'm wearing light blue Levis and a light-blue, western-style, long-sleeved shirt. My watch has buttons, gadgets, whistles because I like to see things work.

I ask questions because I want to know the answers. I try to make sense of my world. I like classes and teachers who challenge me. I can name the ones who don't--who don't expect as much from their students. I am proud to be in honors classes since they are the most difficult ones here at Capital High. My teachers say that they are amazed at my progress. I'll bet that most of them don't even know that I've only been in the U.S. for six years.

I don't want you to think I am a perfect student. Sometimes when I get home late from soccer practice I feel tired and lazy. I might postpone working on assignments if they're not due the next day. I think I work best under pressure.

My soccer coach says I remind him of himself. I play hard to win, and I feel bad when I don't. When I am on the soccer field, it is my world. My teammates are my friends. I don't have a lot of friends at this school yet. My family moved here from Los Angeles last year.

I think that life is easier for Americans than for Mexicans in the U.S.. I want to work now so that things will be easier for me later. At my old school I had Mexican friends who had decided to grow and change. They had ambitions and were willing to work hard. I have only met Americans who are like that at this school. I feel closer to them than to my new Mexican friends. I don't want to be limited by a *barrio* mentality.

Technical words come out easier in English, but I still speak best from my heart in Spanish. I am proud of being able to express myself in two languages.

I want to study math and science and maybe be a teacher. I have applied to some good universities for next year.

Marco Nieto ("Post ESL")

My family tells me and my sister to study hard. I spend my time at school in classes or in the library. I am very proud of my good grades.

That doesn't mean that I don't like sports or anything. I just don't do that at school. You see, my church has a sports program, and I play on the basketball and soccer teams. You don't have to speak English to play on those teams. In fact, we like to speak Spanish when we play because nobody can understand us that way.

My hair is light brown and very wavy. I wear a mustache because I think it makes my round face look older. I dress in Levis and knit shirts and high-top Nike tennis shoes.

I went to the office last month and told them I wanted to find out about colleges. They wrote my name down and later called me out of class to talk to people from the community college. That's where I'll probably go after I graduate. I'm a junior this year.

I have friends who speak only English. We help each other and mess around. In science, the only difficult class I have, my friend Dave and I do stuff together. I wish I had more friends like him.

All my classes are pretty easy. Art and music are fun. My teacher says he likes the picture I drew of a "karate man." My counselor said I'll have consumer math next year. I still don't understand why they haven't given me algebra yet. I started to study it before I left Mexico.

It's sometimes hard to be one of the only students in my remedial English class who wants to work. Lots of the guys in there say they are going to change teachers because she makes us read and write and explain what we think. I figure that the more I work the more I will learn--and I want to learn.

Cecilia Montoya ("Post ESL")

My family and I used to live on a small *rancho* in Jalisco. I feel more poor than rich.

My brother came here first to work and pay for the rest of us to come. I was lucky. Lots of kids have to work when they get here. I got to go to school. My parents think that's important for their children. I'm their only daughter. They joke and say I will probably get married right after I finish high school, but I want to study computers. Going to a university would take too long, but I want to get some specialized training. I want to succeed.

My teachers notice me because I work hard and try to use English. I'm quiet, but if I'm comfortable in a class with my friends, I raise my hand a lot. In classes with Americans, I sit back and watch and listen.

I feel good when my teachers speak to me in English. I feel good when they understand me. I think I've failed somehow when they say, "Would you please repeat that." I think to myself, "Oh, no, not again. When will I ever be able to speak English like

I speak Spanish?" Maybe I'm making some progress. I talk to a few Americans in my classes. They ask for my help, like we are *compañeras.*

Some days my long brown hair hangs down my back. Other days my bangs are combed high and stiff like a *cholita.* My clothes also change back and forth between the two looks: some days casual and soft; other days form-fitting and hard. It's like I'm trying to figure out what's really me. I buy some make-up from my friend who sells Avon, but I don't wear as much as some of my *compañeras.*

My friends all listen to what I have to say in Spanish. I say what I think. They seem to respect me for that. I hope to succeed. I am so proud of my brother who is a manager at McDonald's.

Chapter 5

THE REPORT OF THE FINDINGS: THEME 1

WHAT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THEMSELVES AS LEARNERS OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

> *Voy a saber un día lo que dicen. Tengo que saber un día lo que dicen. Y pienso es ésto lo más importante...[ganas de hablar] y entender lo que dicen para poder expresarse en un país que es extraño para nosotros.* (CM, I1,2)
>
> Someday I'm going to know what they're saying. Someday I have to know what they're saying. I think that's the most important thing...[wanting to speak] and understand what they're saying so that we can express ourselves in a country that's foreign to us. (CM, I1,2)

Theme 1, co-researchers' descriptions of themselves as second language learners, has been organized into four sub-themes: A) general English language background and proficiency, B) progress and problems with English, C) language learning strategies, and D) reasons for learning English.

The discussion of each of the sub-themes of Theme 1 will be preceded by an outline of the categories, properties, and, in some cases, sub-properties relating to the sub-theme.

Following is an outline of the findings discussed in Theme 1 (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Theme 1: What students say about themselves as learners of English as a second language.

A. GENERAL ENGLISH LANGUAGE BACKGROUND AND PROFICIENCY

1. Differences in formal English classes in Mexico
2. Differences in "exposure" to English in Mexico
3. No English proficiency upon arrival in U.S.

B. REASONS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

1. Personal goals
    a. To speak English well
    b. To become educated in U.S.
        i. Succeed in current classes
        ii. Finish high school/adult school
        iii. Continue education after high school
    c. To have more and better job choices
    d. To make financial gains
        i. Help family
        ii. Buy "things"
2. Family values
    a. Children have moral and financial obligation to family
    b. Families value education and English
    c. Families allow children to choose course of study/ career/job
    d. Few families encourage high-status, professional careers
    e. Some families have gender-based expectations for children

C. PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS WITH ENGLISH

1. Progress and problems understanding spoken English
    a. Progress in understanding monolingual Americans
    b. Insufficient visual cues from teachers
    c. Rate of speech unmodified by native speakers
    d. Comprehension limited by English vocabulary and conceptual understanding

2. Progress and problems speaking English
    a. Frustration over slow improvement in speaking proficiency
    b. Pronunciation impedes communication and causes embarrassment
    c. Limited acquisition of language structures
    d. Limited need or "pressure" to speak English
    e. Inability to speak at "normal" speed
3. Progress and problems reading English
    a. Confusion between oral reading and silent reading
    b. Limited understanding and recall of over-all meaning and isolated vocabulary
    c. Inability to function academically with reading as main instructional strategy
    d. Insufficient time allotted for reading
4. Progress and problems writing English
    a. Unaccustomed to cursive writing

  - b. Problems with spelling and language structures
  - c. Expression limited by English vocabulary
  - d. Questioned importance and usefulness of writing topics
  - e. Concerned with discourse patterns
  - f. Constrained by time limits

D. LEARNING STRATEGIES

1. Consulting classmates
   - a. Asking classmates to explain class content, procedures, and English
   - b. Asking classmates to copy their written work
2. Contacting teachers
   - a. Asking teachers to model pronunciation and spelling
   - b. Asking teachers to give definitions and labels
   - c. Asking teachers to give examples, explanations, and verifications
   - d. Asking teachers for help before or after class
   - e. Asking teachers to change teaching methods
3. Contacting aides
   - a. Asking aides to explain class content and procedures
4. Self-help in class
   - a. Watching and listening to teacher carefully
   - b. Taking notes from teachers' presentations
   - c. Using texts and dictionaries
5. Self-help out of class
   - a. Using dictionaries
   - b. Doing extra reading and writing in English
   - c. Getting help from family members
   - d. Studying "until it sticks"

General English Background and Proficiency

A. GENERAL ENGLISH BACKGROUND AND PROFICIENCY

1. Differences in formal English classes in Mexico
2. Differences in "exposure" to English in Mexico
3. No English proficiency upon arrival in U.S.

There were differences in the types of formal English classes and the general "exposure" to English that co-researchers reported they had experienced before coming to the United States. Regardless of their backgrounds, however, none of them expressed any confidence in their English proficiency when they arrived from Mexico.

Differences in Formal English Classes

All of the co-researchers who had attended English classes in Mexico agreed that the formal instruction had not prepared them to function in English-speaking environments in the United States. Eleven had studied English for at least two years as part of their normal curriculum in either the public and private schools of the *secundaria* in Mexico. Their classes were held from two to five times each week with instruction mainly given in Spanish. They cited teaching methods and their own insufficient motivation as the major obstacles to learning English in their Mexican schools.

Interviewees discounted the value of their English instruction in Mexico, stating that they felt they had learned little in classes where they simply copied words and sentences their teachers wrote on blackboards. Adriana gave a typical account of classes:

> Well, in Mexico it's only writing because the pronunciation isn't exact. The teachers don't pronounce the words well. We don't learn about anything but writing and handling verbs and other words. It's only the most basic things like numbers, things, and some verbs. That's all...[We hardly spoke] at all. (AE, I1,4)

In the two cases where students said that their teachers had used English in the classroom, the students admitted that they had made no effort to learn because they saw no need for knowing English. Marco reported:

> I didn't like them [English classes in Mexico]. I never thought I would need them...He gave us lots of sentences. I didn't understand them. There were lots of words I didn't understand. He spoke only English. We didn't understand him. (MN, I1,7)

Differences in General "Exposure" to English

None of the co-researchers, regardless of their place of origin, credited English experiences outside of formal instruction with enabling them to understand and speak

English when they arrived from Mexico. General "exposure" to English in Mexico varied depending on the size and location of the town where students had lived.

Students' experiences ranged from Samuel who had heard no English to Claudio and Adriana who had come into daily contact with English. Samuel, who came from a small fishing village, still remembered hearing and using his first English words whose meanings he has only recently learned:

> I knew nothing, nothing, nothing...In Mexico, one of my friends last year during Holy Week...asked me, "*Samuel, dame crema*, please." She asked me for the cream, and I gave it to her, but I didn't know she was saying *por favor*. I didn't know what that meant...I came on June 1...I arrived during the night with my godmother. The first thing I said was "bye-bye," but I didn't know what that meant. I just said, "bye-bye." I didn't know how to say it right, either. I didn't say it right, like that. "Bye, *madrina*, bye." I only said, "ba, ba." (MD, I2,4)

Samuel's comments were in contrast to those of Claudio and Adriana who said they had friends in Mexico who spoke English. Claudio said he had learned to swear in English while living in Mexico City:

> [I learned bad words in English while I was] in Mexico. And when I got here they were the first ones I learned...Even here at school to say give me a pencil or throw me the ball, you use bad words. (CE, I1,6)

Adriana reported that she had been prompted by her friends and her love of American television programs to "pick up" some English words when she lived in Tijuana:

> My friends used to talk to me in English, and I would say to myself, "What are they telling me?" It was really something if I could understand them. And when I didn't understand them, well, I asked them and they helped me understand...They really liked English, and I hardly did at all...I was a little interested because there was a television program in English that I liked, and I was frustrated not knowing what they were saying. That's why I tried a little harder...They [friends] used to tell me about movies they saw in English. (AE, I1,5)

No English Proficiency Upon Arrival in the United States

None of the interviewees expressed any confidence in their ability to communicate in English when they entered the United States, regardless of the number of years they had studied it in school or their English-speaking contacts in Mexico.

> [When I came from Mexico I could say] nothing, absolutely nothing...[I couldn't understand] either. Maybe only when they said "bye." It's the only thing I understood...[I could read or write] a few words that I remembered from the *secundaria*, but not many. (CM, I1, 1)
>
> When I went somewhere I was ashamed when they asked me something and I didn't understand...I didn't even know how to ask for a hamburger. (CM, I1, 2)

Summary of students' English-language background and proficiency.

Interviewees' English-language experiences differed according to the location and size of their communities and the formal instruction they had received in English classes in Mexico. None of them said they could understand or speak English when they arrived in the United States.

Reasons for Learning English

B. REASONS FOR LEARNING ENGLISH

1. Personal goals
    a. To speak English well
    b. To become educated in U.S.
        i. Succeed in current classes
        ii. Finish high school/adult school
        iii. Continue education after high school
    c. To have more and better job choices
    d. To make financial gains
        i. Help family
        ii. Buy "things"
2. Family values
    a. Children have moral and financial obligation to family
    b. Families value education and English
    c. Families allow children to choose course of study/ career/ job
    d. Few families encourage high-status, professional careers
    e. Some families have gender-based expectations for children

Personal Goals

Each of the co-researchers expressed both personal goals and family values as reasons for wanting to learn English. Their personal goals included a desire to speak English well, to become educated in the United States, to have more and better job choices, and to make financial gains.

Students' Personal Goal: To Speak English Well

All interviewees were highly motivated to speak English well.

Samuel, the most recent immigrant, was among the most determined: "I say I'm going to learn English, and I'm going to learn it" (SD, I2, 13). Cecilia, after two and one-half years in the U.S. was somewhat discouraged by her accent, but she remained optimistic: "I want to speak it like I speak Spanish..., like I am talking to you" (CM, I2, 3).

Students' Personal Goal: To Become Educated in the U.S.

Although they explained that they knew many Mexicans who function easily in the U.S. with a minimum of English, co-researchers stated that they wanted to participate more fully in opportunities that would only be available to them if they could communicate in English. Educational opportunities were of the most immediate concern to interviewees. Although Samuel would not allow himself to speculate past the point of succeeding in current classes and completing this year of school, all of the others expressed a goal of completing high school and were at least curious about the possibility of continuing their education after obtaining a diploma.

Since most of the interviewees had entered Capital High when they were older than traditional ninth-graders, counselors had informed them that they might not be able to earn enough credits to graduate without going to Adult School when they became eighteen or nineteen years old. Several of them had taken classes in summer school and at night to attempt to bridge the gap. This became increasingly difficult for some of them as work obligations consumed their available time.

Only one of the students enrolled as juniors or seniors could explain which of his graduation requirements he had not yet fulfilled. Grade levels for immigrant students at Capital High were often based on age rather than educational experiences in either the country of origin or the U.S.. Interviewees, however, repeatedly expressed the hope of getting a diploma through the system they were just beginning to explore.

The importance of learning English was acknowledged by co-researchers when they discussed plans to continue their education after high school. Gabriel explained his dependence on English in this way:

> I would like to continue studying and succeed in having a career if possible. I keep thinking that I'm going to succeed. I need to speak English if I want to continue studying. (GD, I1, 8)

The five students who were interested in technical or vocational training, especially computer studies, also realized that English was indispensable:

> What I want to study here is computer programming. It seems like the easiest... The biggest problem is English because they only speak English in those schools. I imagine that there aren't any programs for foreigners. So that after I've learned more English, I can study computer programming. (CE, I2, 8)

Eight of the students said they were interested in someday attending a college or a university. They questioned me about career opportunities, the California system of higher education, and the availability of scholarships. Only three of these eight interviewees mentioned receiving any counseling about college opportunities: Marco met on a regular basis with a school-organized support group; Ramón, the honors student, received personalized help in filling out applications to two universities; Antonio was given information about the Student Achievement Test (SAT) that is required for entrance to many universities. The five others stated that they were interested in going to a local community college which recruited students from Capital High School.

Co-researchers mentioned immigration status and financial considerations as major factors which only allowed them to think of education after high school as a dream rather than a goal. They expressed a "wait-and-see" attitude toward further education.

Students' Personal Goal: To Have More and Better Job Choices

Eight interviewees came to California with a general idea of the type of work they wanted to do. Five had no idea of which field of study or employment they wanted to enter. Only Ramón, a graduating senior, knew that he specifically wanted to teach mathematics in high school. Two spoke about returning to Mexico to work after completing their education.

Of the eight who had general career goals, computer studies was the first choice of three students and an alternate choice for one who said she would prefer to study dance. One student had tentative plans to go into business. Two had considered careers as teachers but were deterred by the number of years of study required. Both of these students, Yolanda and Margarita, liked the idea of teaching kindergarten, but Margarita thought about this only as an alternative to working in the tourist industry. Bárbara had not entirely given up the dream she had in Mexico of becoming a lawyer, but she questioned her ability to be successful in a language and a culture that were not her own.

Students' Personal Goal: To Make Financial Gains

Earning money while going to school was a personal goal for nine of the co-researchers. Two saw it as a way of satisfying their personal needs, but seven saw it as part of their moral and financial obligations to their families.

Claudio, the only co-researcher who talked about being attracted to the gang culture, was also the one of the two who talked about buying "things" for himself.

> I would like to work and study. I keep wanting things. Yes, I ask my father, but it's not easy asking for a lot of money. If you're not working you can't buy your things. (CE, I2, 7)

Two interviewees sent the bulk of their earnings from part-time jobs back to their families in Mexico. They considered their primary function in the U.S. to be a wage earner, as explained by Antonio: "I have to work. I have to support my family...I am the oldest...I send all of the money to Mexico. I am working and studying--two things" (AN, I2, 7).

Two were making major financial contributions to their families living in the U.S.. Bárbara's work schedule was the most demanding:

> I have two jobs. [I have to work] because right now they [parents] are not working. It's hard with all of the expenses without them working.
> I have to work because my brothers are old, but they don't live with us any more. [I am the oldest of the three] who are still at home with my mother and father. (BT, I1, 7)

Three others stated that they would like to be able to contribute to family expenses but were unable to because of legal problems. Yolanda's comments were typical: "All of my papers aren't in order yet. I would like to work to help my father with all of the expenses that we have, but I can't yet" (YA, I4, 6).

These fourteen students remained in school with their personal goals modified by reality, as stated by Gabriel: "It's not what I want to be. It's what I can be" (GD, 5-16-90,1).

Family Values

All of the co-researchers said that their parents supported their children's goals of staying in school and learning English. Some described this support as an underlying value in their families rather than a subject that was discussed often or in depth; others mentioned their parents' verbal insistence on good grades and attendance. All informants stated that their parents left the choice of studies, jobs, and eventual careers up to their children, with some reported differences in expectations for sons and daughters. Co-researchers indicated that their moral and financial obligations to help their families superceded educational and career goals

Families Valued Education and English

When asked what his father thought about his progress in school, Samuel responded:

> He [father] didn't say anything about that, but, well, I know that he wants my sisters and me to get good grades here. He doesn't want us to get bad grades. That's why I try to help myself, by answering well on tests and all that. (SD, I2, 2)

Some parents explicitly stated their academic expectations. The following was a typical conversation recorded in Yolanda's art class where students chatted in Spanish while working on their projects:

> Gisela: I like to dance. If my grades aren't good. I can't go.
> Jesus: I can't stay in school without good grades.
> Yolanda: My parents are pretty strict, too.
> Gisela: It's my mother who is strict. (11-6-90, 11)

All of the co-researchers described parents who, regardless of their own educational backgrounds, were anxious for their children to have as many educational opportunities as possible. Eight informants, whose entire families had moved here, reported that their families had come so that the children could have a better education which they considered the gateway to a better life. Adriana said: "They want us to study and to have a good future" (AE, I2, 6)

Both students and parents, however, assumed that it would not take students long to acquire English for academic purposes. The conflict between staying in school and "dropping out" to get a job was ever-present. All interviewees, like Claudio, reported that parents would accept their decisions to work or study: "He [father] says to do what I want. If I want to work he will support me. If I want to study, he'll support me" (CE, I2, 7). In some cases, interviewees had older brothers and sisters who urged them to stay in classes because they regretted their decisions not to do so. Margarita, for example, carefully explained that not all of her siblings had finished the *secundaria*, but "that was their choice," since their parents had offered to support them if they were satisfied attending a local school (12-3-90, 18-19).

Few Families Encouraged High-Status, Professional Careers for Their Children

Bárbara was the only co-researcher who reported a parent's suggestion to become a doctor which did not interest her as much as becoming a lawyer (BT, I2, 10). Genoveva stated that she did not want to become a teacher as her mother had suggested. (GM, I1, 11). Other informants described no encouragement from their parents to enter prestigious professions, such as medicine or law.

Families Allowed Children to Choose Their Courses and Careers

Informants stated that if they decided to stay in school, their parents left the choice of studies and careers up to them. Gabriel explained:

> My family...would like me to continue studying, not to be lazy here at school... They [don't tell me what to study]. They just want me to keep studying. They would rather have me study than work. In any case, it would be better for me to quit my job than not to quit my job and not go to school. (GD, I2, 2)

Two types of interviewees reported that their educational or career goals in some way conflicted with family needs or values: single males supporting nuclear families in Mexico and females who faced expectations of early marriages.

The two male informants who supported their nuclear families in Mexico reported a lack of communication with their parents. They said they were on their own without anyone to show interest in their schooling. Both Raúl and Antonio were highly motivated and successful but were eager for adult reassurance and encouragement. Antonio showed me his straight-A report card and said that his aunt and uncle, with whom he lived, did not care about it, and that his mother, widowed and in Mexico, would probably never see it. Raúl said that he had never discussed future plans with his parents:

> I don't know [what kind of work they would like me to do]. I have never ask them. They never told me anything. It's because they're in Mexico.
> I don't have any communication with them. It's been a year now. [They agree] that I should stay here. (RQ, I2, 11)

Statements by four female interviewees indicated that their parents' expectations included the prospects of early marriages. The following statement by Cecilia was typical: "When I tell them that I want to study, they support me, but sometimes they laugh and tell me, 'No, you're going to get married real soon.' I don't think so...I want to study something first" (CM, I2, 2).

Informal conversations with female co-researchers and their friends provided additional evidence that many of them agreed with their parents' expectations for early marriages. Wedding dates, recipes, and childrearing philosophies were common topics of conversation among interviewees and their fifteen through seventeen year old girlfriends.

During conversations at lunch and at rallies, girls talked about job opportunities as maids during the school year and summer. Cecilia questioned her friends limited aspirations and nodded in agreement with the opinion expressed by Marisa, not one of the fourteen interviewees:

> I have only been in the U.S. for four months. I went to summer school last summer, four hours each day...I want to finish high school. I want to learn English. I don't want to be a maid like the others. I want to be a tour guide so I can talk to people in two languages. I'm not sure if I'll be working in Mexico or in the U.S. because I'm not here legally, but I just want to get a good job. (10-24-90, 7)

Summary of students' reasons for learning English.

Students personal goals were tempered by the realities of their lives as immigrants. Learning English played a pivotal role in the personal goals of all of the co-researchers since they wanted to succeed in their current classes as a prelude to future studies and/or jobs.

Interviews reported that parents allowed them to choose their own careers and courses of study. Two families encouraged high status professions. Family values included early marriages for girls and financial responsibilities for all children. Jobs severely limited study time for some interviewees.

Progress and Problems with English

C. PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS WITH ENGLISH

1. Progress and problems understanding spoken English
    a. Progress in understanding monolingual Americans
    b. Insufficient visual cues from teachers
    c. Rate of speech unmodified by native speakers
    d. Comprehension limited by English vocabulary and conceptual understanding
2. Progress and problems speaking English
    a. Frustration over slow improvement in speaking proficiency
    b. Pronunciation impedes communication and causes embarrassment
    c. Limited acquisition of language structures
    d. Limited need or "pressure" to speak English
    e. Inability to speak at "normal" speed
3. Progress and problems reading English
    a. Confusion between oral reading and silent reading
    b. Limited understanding and recall of over-all meaning and isolated vocabulary
    c. Inability to function academically with reading as main instructional strategy
    d. Insufficient time allotted for reading
4. Progress and problems writing English
    a. Unaccustomed to cursive writing
    b. Problems with spelling and language structures
    c. Expression limited by English vocabulary
    d. Questioned importance and usefulness of writing topics
    e. Concerned with discourse patterns
    f. Constrained by time limits

Co-researchers' progress and problems with English have been placed into categories corresponding to the four language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. This does not mean to imply that these four areas do not overlap in the process of whole language acquisition, use, and teaching. These categories simply provide a convenient framework for discussion of the properties suggested by the interviewees.

Understanding English: Progress and Problems

Co-researchers said they felt they had made the most progress with English comprehension, even though they had difficulty giving instances of when they felt comfortable understanding English. They were most proud of understanding English as spoken by monolingual Americans both inside and outside of the classroom. They reported the following problems understanding spoken English: insufficient visual cues from teachers, native speakers' rate of speech, and their own limited vocabularies and conceptual understanding.

Progress in understanding monolingual Americans

Co-researchers gave these examples of when they had been able to understand English spoken by monolingual Americans. Samuel (ESL 1) was delighted to have understood simple directions given to his father by a salesman in a hardware store (SD, I2, 12). Gabriel (ESL 2) measured his progress in English by how well he understood his boss and customers at the pizza parlor where he worked (GD, I1, 2). Margarita (ESL 3) was proud of "getting along" and understanding people in her Regional Occupational Program (ROP) program which involved teachers, fellow workers, and bosses in a retail store (MD, I1, 1). Ramón ("post-ESL") talked about being able to understand teammates who all spoke English at once during normal conversations (RF, I1, 9).

Since English spoken by teachers in the classroom was the most input that many of the interviewees received in English, they gauged their comprehension by how well they understood their teachers and coaches. Margarita (ESL 3) was pleased with her progress. She said, "None of my teachers ask me any more if I understand what they explained"

(MD, I1, 1). Claudio (ESL 1) seemed proudest of his ability to understand his football coach in the classroom/locker room:

> There's a coach who talks a little fast, but I already understand lots of the words he says, and they're related. I try to make associations because with the four words I understand out of eight words, I try to put them together. And you can imagine the expressions he says them with, the gestures he makes. You pay more attention... (CE, I1, 8)

Students explained that they felt good when they could understand the general meaning of what the teacher was saying. "It's not that I understand it word for word, but I understand what he's telling us, what he's explaining" (GD, I3, 9).

Four interviewees talked about the second semester of their first year or the beginning of their second year as being the turning point in their general classroom comprehension. This explanation was given by Cecilia from the perspective of a "post-ESL" student:

> Since my second year, and at the end of my first year I started to understand everything...During my second year, already, I never asked for help. Only my first year, during the first months I started to ask for help, but by the end, I hardly did at all because I remember doing the work well and everything...The second semester I didn't need much help...sometimes only when I needed to speak. But with work, when they told me, "You are going to do this," I would never say, "What are we going to do?"...After two or three months I didn't need help in understanding what was happening...I got used to what they were going to do...I knew the page came first, and I remembered the numbers from Mexico. (CM, I1, 14)

All students said, however, that they continued to struggle to accommodate to the language use of each of their different teachers. Cecilia was able to analyze the process in this way:

> If you listen, they repeat the same words so you know what they're saying...so that when they say something again, you say to yourself, "That's it." You've captured what it is. It's like a child. I think we learn like a child. (CM, I1, 14)

Insufficient Visual Cues from Teachers

All interviewees reported their reliance on teachers' visual cues, such as gestures or words on the blackboard, for understanding spoken language in their classrooms. Some, however, expressed a stronger dependence on these visual cues. Genoveva (ESL 1), for example, reported the most difficulties since she said that she was able to comprehend little of what was said in academic classes if she did not see the word itself in print. Having completed the *preparatoria* (high school) in Mexico, she expressed confidence in her academic background and study skills. As an ESL 1 student, however, she said that she was unable to function in an ecology class from which she eventually transferred. She reported that she could not understand class content when lecturing in English was the sole means of instruction, even though she had already studied some of the scientific concepts being taught: "There are some notes on the material, but the rest of it is all lecture. Then I can't understand him. That's why the class seems difficult to me" (GM, I1, 10). In her history class, she consistently read the text as the teacher lectured because, as she explained it: "He speaks English, but I only understand a very little...written language helps me because I don't understand the spoken language" (GL, I1, 13).

Rate of Speech Unmodified by Native Speakers of English

Students at all language levels, especially beginning ESL students, described native English speakers' rate of speech as another problem. Claudio (ESL 1) talked about how difficult it was to "catch" English used by football coach and players:

> Over there in sports, the coach says something in English and there's no one who speaks Spanish. You have to listen really well and pay attention...You have to get nearer to the coach because he speaks only English. That's why we have to sit in front of him to be able to catch what he says since he speaks real fast. He barely says one word and another word is already coming, and I didn't understand the first word. (CE, I1, 7)

As he described it, rate of speech was the greatest problem during games themselves:

> [It's hard to understand my teammates during the game] because sometimes someone calls a play during the game. You're there, right? If someone goes off-sides and he didn't see him, he asks: "What did he say? What did he say?" in English. And I have to explain that the official said off-sides and he asks me: "Who? Who?" Well, sometimes I don't know everyone's numbers because I'm

> new. And then I tell him the number, but it's hard because when they ask me the question it's very fast. (CE, I1, 9)

Two of the students in ESL 3 mentioned speed as a handicap in understanding teachers, students, and movies used in their regular academic classes. Bárbara, for example, described her government class where all but five students spoke English as a first language. She explained that class discussions were often animated, but that she and other Spanish-speakers did not participate:

> They speak very quickly...precisely because they're discussing. They speak very quickly, and it's very difficult to understand them. Sometimes I can understand them, but when I would like to give an opinion, well, I can't because I know that I have to speak quickly, and I can't speak quickly. It's a little difficult, but I think for everyone, right?--for everyone for whom English is a second language. (BT, I2, 2)

Teachers' rate of speech was also a problem for Bárbara in a regular health science class even though the teacher used a variety of visual aids and an animated teaching style.

> The teacher is real active. He talks a lot. He talks a whole lot and explains everything to us, but it's a lot harder to understand him. His tests are also a lot harder because he...talks very quickly, very, very, quickly. (BT, I1, 21)

Antonio, a straight-A student, explained that his science teacher's rate of speech was a major problem which was partially overcome when his teacher provided fill-in-the-blank lecture outlines. Antonio said he often relied on a Spanish-speaking tablemate to help him with words that "went by too fast" (AN, I1, 3). Antonio also mentioned the difficulty he had understanding people who "speak too fast" in movies which were often shown in his classes (AN, I1, 13).

Comprehension Limited by English Vocabulary and Conceptual Understanding

All students talked about how many words they felt they still did not understand in English. They talked about vocabulary building as their major task in all classes.

All interviewees said it was more difficult for them to understand material explained in English that they had not already studied in Spanish. José (ESL 1), who had completed his seven years of schooling five years before coming to the United States, explained some of his difficulties in general math in this way:

> That class isn't very hard because I already learned what we're studying in Mexico...But she gives us other things that I didn't have in Mexico and that I never saw...So, when the teacher explains it to us, I don't understand very well. I get along by asking my friends. (JT, I2, 3)

Speaking English: Progress and Problems

Co-researchers reported frustration over their perceived rate of progress in speaking English. They discussed the following problems with communicating orally: pronunciation, limited acquisition of vocabulary and structures, lack of reasons or confidence to speak, and the inability to speak at a "normal" speed.

For all interviewees except Ramón, speaking English well was a more immediate goal than literacy skills. Cecilia's statement was typical: "I know that writing is also important, but I would rather speak it--speak it well, well, well" (CM, I2, 7).

Frustration Over Perceived Rate of Progress in Speaking English

Even though all fourteen participants agreed that they were more proficient in speaking English than when they arrived from Mexico, Raúl (ESL 2) expressed a common apprehension when he explained that he thought he was not progressing quickly enough and that some of his friends were not improving at all.

> I have friends there in that same [English] class who were there last year. They didn't pass anything. They feel just the same. Many of them have been here a long time, too. They've been here for two or three years and they speak the same...They aren't making any progress. I don't know why. (RQ, I1, 5)

Pronunciation Causes Embarrassment and Impedes Communication

All interviewees related some problems in speaking English. The most commonly discussed problem was pronunciation which students said caused embarrassment and impeded communication.

Samuel (ESL 1) explained that his embarrassment was compounded by an intolerant classroom environment in his ESL class:

> I'm ashamed because if I say a word wrong, they laugh at me there...my classmates...they laugh at me and I get mad and I don't like it. That's why I don't speak English with them. (SD, I1, 2)

Even in classes where fellow students did not laugh, most interviewees, regardless of their ESL level, were not confident enough to risk making mistakes. Genoveva, a very recent arrival, described her linguistic discomfort in this statement: "I'm afraid of not pronouncing the words right...I don't know why [I'm afraid]...of not being able to use words right or that people won't understand me" (GM, I1, 8).

"Post-ESL" interviewees continued to express embarrassment about speaking English. Cecilia's comments were typical of students who felt that they could not make themselves understood because of their pronunciation:

> I am happy that he [science teacher] doesn't say to me, "Excuse me. What did you say?" Because when they tell me, "What did you say?" I think, "Oh, no, repeat it again." I feel that nobody understands me. I feel embarrassed. (CM, I1, 8)

Limited Acquisition of Language Structures

Another common speaking problem discussed by interviewees was not knowing how to use language structures (syntax). As explained by Genoveva (ESL 1): "What happens is that I know words, but I don't know how to put them together to be able to ask or answer questions. That's what I can't do" (GM, I2, 7). Gabriel (when he was in ESL 1) expressed it this way: "I don't know...here they teach me the names of things, just things. For example, we already know how to say book, but we don't know how to ask for one or to give one" (GD, I1, 5).

Antonio (ESL 3) explained that he seldom spoke English during his classes:

> I understand it [English]. I can write it, more or less. Since I hardly ever have any practice with English, I have a hard time speaking it fluently without having to think about it before and after. I don't have much practice. (AN, I1, 1)

Limited Need or "Pressure" to Speak English

One of the problems stressed by students was that they had little need to speak English. Antonio, for example, stated that he found it difficult to improve his oral English proficiency because he was able use Spanish for oral communication at school, at work, and at home:

> Sometimes I try to--I say that...in the morning I am going to try not to speak Spanish. I am going to try to speak only English so that I can improve it, but I don't know--. (AN, I1, 1)
>
> I don't succeed [in speaking English] because everyone talks to me in Spanish. If they spoke to me in English, I would answer them in English because I could do it" (AN, I2, 2).

When asked if they had had any successful experiences communicating orally in English, interviewees explained that they did not have many opportunities or "pressure" to speak English in school. Margarita stated that the only time she spoke English in class was when she read orally (MD, I2, 2). Adriana said that she wrote English in class but only spoke it outside of class with non-Spanish-speakers who spoke English as a second language (AE, I1, 1). Five students reported responses they had recently given in class. The following two are typical: Samuel (ESL 1) explained that he gave short answers such as saying the word "cold" in response to a picture cue (SD, I2, 6). Cecilia ("post-ESL") stated that she gave the rhyme scheme to an English poem (12-18-90, 1).

Three of the interviewees, however, described the "pressure" for communication that they encountered at work. The need to communicate messages without worrying about form were key issues in Bárbara's description of her workplace:

> There are a lot of people who aren't Mexican, who don't speak Spanish. With the people who don't speak Spanish I have to see what I can do. It helps a lot because you have to force yourself. You have to speak even if it isn't perfect. You try to do what's possible.
> (BT, I1,2)

Inability to Speak at a "Normal" Speed

Speed was mentioned as a factor in speaking as well as understanding English. Students said that they hesitated too much before speaking, and could not keep up their side of a social dialog in English. Cecilia's comments were typical of those made by advanced students: "[My biggest problem in English] is not being able to speak it quickly. I speak Spanish, and I would like to be able to speak English the same way--quickly--and I can't" (CM, I2, 7).

Reading English: Progress and Problems

Academic success is critically dependent on literacy skills. Co-researchers expressed some confusion over the distinctions between oral and silent reading. Participants, especially beginning ESL students, described reading in many academic classes as too difficult for them. Co-researchers identified their major reading problems as limited understanding and recall of specific vocabulary, inability to comprehend or retain overall meaning, and time constraints.

Confusion Between Oral Reading and Silent Reading

When asked about their progress in reading English, eight of the participants responded with concerns about their pronunciation. They reported oral reading as very common in both their Mexican and American classrooms and equated oral reading with class participation, speaking, and reading in English. Adriana ("post-ESL"), for example, discussed oral reading in her basic track English class in this way: "Only those who want to, participate. I hardly ever read because I am afraid I will pronounce a word wrong" (AE, I1, 12). Yolanda (ESL 2) stated, "I like to read, but sometimes I don't know how to pronounce words well" (YA, I3, 11).

Inability to Function Academically with Reading as the Primary Instructional Strategy

Reading is introduced gradually into the ESL curriculum at Capital High, but beginning ESL students are often placed in content classes which rely on difficult independent reading as the main instructional strategy. Beginning students expressed frustrations at being unable to meet inconsistent linguistic expectations. Comments of teachers of sheltered and regular content classes suggested that they were unaware of the special literacy needs of their ESL students. Teachers of regular content classes reported that they were not informed of the identity of ESL students until the end of the first semester of the school year.

Two of the four interviewees in ESL 1 were placed in a sheltered U.S. history class where reading the text, which could not be taken out of the classroom, was the primary method of instruction. Comprehension problems were most acute for José (ESL 1) who had not studied English during his seven years of schooling in Mexico. For example, José asked for my assistance in a Life Skills class when filling out a form asking for first, middle, and last names. The next class period in a sheltered U.S. history class he was asked to use English to read about and analyze the differences between the Federalist and Anti-Federalist systems. During an interview José admitted, "I understand almost nothing in the book" (JT, I2, 2). My classroom observations supported his self-reported literacy problems.

> While his classmates read their history text to find definitions for 26 words, José sat at his desk, occasionally glancing at his book, glancing more often at Genoveva's paper behind him. He commented on the car that the student next to rested on the desk across from him. He turned a few pages, chewed his gum, and

> examined his friend's pen. He did not turn in his definitions at the end of class. [12-12-90, 8]

Comments from teachers suggested that they were unaware of the level of difficulty that reading posed for language minority students. A U.S. history teacher, for example, whose class included 30 students ranging from ESL 1 to "post-ESL," assumed that students could read and discuss historical issues if they could converse socially in English.

> Teacher: These classes are too big. There are six or seven kids in here who belong in a regular class. They don't want to leave. Their friends come and ask me to get into the class. I say, "No way. You speak better English than I do." These kids pretend they don't know English. (10-30-90, 9)

Limited Understanding and Retention of Over-All Meaning and Isolated Vocabulary

Reading comprehension problems were not limited to ESL 1 students. All of the students talked about having problems with both over-all meaning and specific vocabulary. Bárbara's (ESL 3) reaction was typical:

> [Reading in English] is very difficult for me. [I need] practice...and also I don't know how to pronounce some words well. I don't know what they mean. I also lack, well, speed. I'm lacking all of that. (BT, I1, 6)

> She stated that she did her best given the amount of reading that she had to do:

> [When I have to read a lot in science or government] I read it and what I don't understand--I go right on. I don't understand everything very well, only some things. And with that I help myself a little. [My teachers don't help us with the reading]. (BT, I1, 17)

Most students relied on concepts they knew in Spanish, but still had to study hard to learn English vocabulary, as explained by Antonio (ESL 3):

> [The PE text is pretty hard for most Latinos]. For Americans, well, it's their language. It's easy for them to do. When we have tests, I have to study a lot to learn the words in English, but if you know, more or less, what the words mean in Spanish, it's easier to move into English. (AN, I1, 11)

Reading assignments were especially difficult when students were asked to read literature from different time periods such as the selections read by ESL 3 and "post-ESL" students. Cecilia had this reaction to her reading of The Scarlet Letter: "There are words that I don't understand...when I'm reading I don't get much out of it" (CM I1, 10).

Ramón ("post-ESL") had this same initial reaction to reading Candide in his honors English class [1-10-91, 4]. He explained, however, how his teachers helped him "get the meaning out," a process of reading for meaning that other interviewees did not mention. He explained the process in this way:

> [I don't have problems with normal reading] I have problems when the books are very difficult--like the book for government. I didn't understand anything. I read, but I didn't understand the meaning...When I didn't understand, I read it again. Since the teacher gave us work to get it [meaning] out, that's how I more or less understood. (RF, I1, 5)

Ramón specified that students' "work" did not involve standard end-of-the-chapter questions.

Insufficient Time Allotted for In-Class Reading

Time limits were a problem which all co-researchers discussed in relation to tests and in-class reading. At Capital High only class sets of books were purchased for some English, physical education, science, and social studies classes. Since the readings were often challenging, students explained that they were forced to quickly copy answers they did not understand from the text or a friend if they did not want to return after school to use the books.

The following interchange, recorded during a classroom observation, demonstrated Gabriel's frustration with an assigned reading on physical fitness in a physical education class:

> Gabriel: [to María] I want to understand and write the answers in my own words.
> María: We don't have time to do it that way.
> Researcher: [pointing to a paragraph explaining flexibility] How do you understand what this means?
> [Gabriel started to orally translate the paragraph from English to Spanish]
> Researcher: Is this how you always do it?
> Gabriel: Sometimes I just understand, but if it's too hard I put it word for word in Spanish.
> [Gabriel continued translating but then shook his head and copied two sentences containing the word "flexibility."]
> Teacher: [to the Spanish speakers] You don't have any more time to work on that today. It's your turn to do the stretch test.

> [Students left the room joking about how bad it was going to smell when everyone took their shoes off.] [11-15-90, 4]

Tests, as well as in-class reading, combined the pressure of comprehension and time. Bárbara explained her frustrations in this way:

> [Tests are hard] because sometimes there are questions where I don't know the words...I don't know what they mean and I can't ask her [bilingual friend]...or use dictionaries or anything. So I just skip the question. They [tests] are the hardest. BT, I1, 21

Two students reported that they were very discouraged about retaining little of what they read for tests. Adriana ("post-ESL") was convinced that there was something wrong with her because she could not remember facts she had read:

> The ESL teacher taught well. What happens is that when I'm reading something doesn't stick in my head. I had that problem, and I still have it in English because all of the assignments we had were things that we read and then she would give us a test on what we read. Nothing much stuck so I barely passed...With vocabulary--I can remember all that. (AE, I1, 8)

Yolanda talked about giving up plans to stay in school because none of the things she was reading and studying for tests seemed "to stick."

Writing English: Progress and Problems

Students discussed the following writing problems: cursive writing; spelling and structures; vocabulary; unimportant topics; discourse patterns; and time constraints. They reported the most difficulties with word and sentence-level skills. Ramón, a resident of the U.S. for six years, was the only one who talked about discourse patterns in his compositions. Time pressure was a re-occurring concern.

Cursive Writing

Cursive writing was volunteered as a problem by two students in ESL 1, one of whom had completed the *primaria* and the other who had completed the *preparatoria.* Samuel stated, "I got nervous when I wrote this [language log]. I can't write well here...[in Mexico] they didn't teach me cursive writing" (SD, I2, 1). Genoveva explained that she, too, was uncomfortable doing assignments in cursive writing:

> There [in Mexico], we only use it in one grade, in elementary school in the first year...Some people use it, but not many. Everyone uses block letters, printing...We don't like it [cursive] very much because nobody knows how to write it. I'm not used to it. (GM, I2, 3)

Problems with Spelling and Structures

English spelling and and structures were problems discussed by co-researchers from beginning through advanced ESL levels. Samuel, the newest language learner, expressed the greatest frustration with spelling:

> I get bad grades because I don't know which letters to write--for example, "yallow" instead instead of "yellow." I put "a" instead of "e"...I learned the fruit and lots of things like that, but when I have to write the lists, I don't know which letters to write and they come out wrong...and if one letter is wrong, the teacher marks the whole word wrong. (SD, I1, 1)

Claudio claimed that Mexicans have a natural disregard for spelling in their own language which they transfer to English:

> Teachers there [in Mexico] don't mark the word wrong if you didn't put an accent mark. If you didn't write an "h" they don't mark the word wrong...Once the word is written it doesn't make any difference to me. (CE, I1, 14-15)

Some co-researchers stated that spelling was a writing problem in English which they would like to correct. Yolanda (ESL 2) stated that during dictations, "I write them [words] like I think they're correct, but afterwards I see that some are right and some are wrong" (YA, I4, 4). Bárbara said that she had asked her government teacher at the end of a test to please excuse language mistakes like spelling since she was an ESL student. She explained that she had received no response from him and was hesitant to approach him again about her special writing needs.

Sentence level writing difficulties were discussed by two co-researchers. Raúl (ESL 2) said that his biggest problem in English was writing complete sentences. He said that he felt a sense of accomplishment when his reading teacher accepted his work. Ramón ("post-ESL") specified verb forms as his main sentence-level problem.

Written Expression Limited by English Vocabulary

A lack of English vocabulary was mentioned by four interviewees as a writing problem. Raúl (ESL 2), for example, said that he was grateful that his ESL teacher was helping students learn synonyms to improve their writing. Ramón ("post-ESL) also said he needed to express himself more effectively:

> When we're writing a paper about a story that has, so to speak, lots of themes, I have problems trying to write words well, certain words, big words. I write the basics well. When I go to write about what I thought of the story, sometimes I have problems saying it like I want to. (RF, I1, 5)

Bárbara (ESL 3), on the other hand, said that vocabulary was not a writing problem because her aim was to communicate her thoughts with the words she had acquired:

> When I have to write...something for my classes, I do it with the words I already know...I don't explain myself real well in my writing, but they understand me..It's easier for me to write than read. (BT, I1, 18)

Questioned Importance and Usefulness of Writing Topics

Gabriel (ESL 2) was the only student who questioned the topics he was given as assignments. Even though he completed all assigned writing, he explained that he gave only minimal attention to anything he did not think was interesting or useful. During a lunchtime conversation he explained why he had only spent a few minutes writing a paragraph about his favorite animal in his ESL 2 class:

> Researcher: Don't you like to write in English?
> Gabriel: Yes, I like to, but in Mr. Smith's class I don't pay much attention to it because the subjects aren't useful. They don't help me. Mr. Brown's class is different. (11-15-90, 9)

Gabriel explained that in Mr. Brown's class students wrote letters to the editor when newspapers were repeatedly delivered late for classroom use. Gabriel explained that the teacher sent the letters immediately to the newspaper office because the letters were important.

Concerned with Discourse Patterns

Ramón was the only co-researcher who mentioned discourse patterns as one of his writing concerns. He stated that teachers in both his honors English class and his honors government class spent time helping students learning the academic skills of writing to specific audiences and supporting their statements. Ramón explained that he needed to know "what the teacher is asking for in the assignments" (RF, I1, 5).

His government teacher described the language process he was fostering:

> Teacher: It's a holistic thing. Students have to read to become knowledgeable, but then they have to be able to express themselves orally and in writing. I'm willing to take time to help them learn to write well. On the AP [advanced placement test], they need to know how to support their statements. (1-9-91, 11a)

Constrained by Time Limits

Four interviewees discussed time limits as a writing problem imposed by teachers. When doing assignments or taking tests in the classroom, students said they did not feel they had the time to express themselves carefully. Three students mentioned speed as a problem when writing short answer responses. Ramón was the only one who described the pressure of writing essays in class for tests.

> Researcher: Which do you think will be your hardest final?
> Ramón: English.
> Researcher: Why?
> Ramón: Because it will be an essay test and I won't have a lot of time to write. When I write at home I can take as much time as I like. (1-10-90, 4)

Summary of students' progress and problems with English.

All interviewees agreed that they had made progress in understanding English since their arrival from Mexico. They explained that their main comprehension problems related to insufficient visual cues from teachers, native speakers' rate of speech, and their own background knowledge in Spanish.

Interviewees described four major areas in which they had experienced problems speaking English. They said that their pronunciation embarrassed them and made it difficult to be understood. They indicated that they were also concerned about their lack of acquired vocabulary and language structures. Students expressed frustration over their inability to use vocabulary words they had memorized. All interviewees, except Ramón, said they lacked the confidence to speak English because they were seldom "pressured" to use English. Speed was again mentioned as a factor, this time in the context of maintaining a "normal" conversation.

Co-researchers said that their reading proficiency played a large role in determining their academic success or failure. They reported no coordination between the literacy requirements for their ESL classes and their academic classes. They identified their major problems as limited understanding and retention of overall meaning and isolated vocabulary, as well as time constraints for in-class reading and tests. They stated that their reading problems were discouraging them from continuing their studies.

The writing experiences and problems described by twelve out of fourteen interviewees were confined to mechanics. They explained that they had been asked to form letters, spell words, make complete sentences, write correct verb forms, and get "right" answers from their textbooks within prescribed periods of time. These were the writing issues that concerned them. Only one of the co-researchers questioned the importance and usefulness of writing about some teacher-chosen topics. Only one of the co-researchers said he was concerned about communicating with a specific audience.

Language Learning Strategies

D. LEARNING STRATEGIES

1. Consulting classmates
    a. Asking classmates to explain class content, procedures, and English
    b. Asking classmates to copy their written work
2. Contacting teachers
    a. Asking teachers to model pronunciation and spelling
    b. Asking teachers to give definitions and labels
    c. Asking teachers to give examples, explanations, and verifications
    d. Asking teachers for help before or after class
    e. Asking teachers to change teaching methods
3. Contacting aides
    a. Asking aides to explain class content and procedures
4. Self-help in class
    a. Watching and listening to teacher carefully
    b. Taking notes from teachers' presentations
    c. Using texts and dictionaries
5. Self-help out of class
    a. Using dictionaries
    b. Doing extra reading and writing in English
    c. Getting help from family members
    d. Studying "until it sticks"

Since they had been educated in Mexican schools, co-researchers had established learning strategies which they transferred to their new setting. These included asking classmates, teachers, aides, as well as self-help strategies in the classroom and at home.

Consulting Classmates

All interviewees indicated that they relied on Spanish-speaking classmates as the primary source of information about class content and procedures, as well as about English. Interviewees with greater proficiency in English stated that they consulted non-Spanish-speaking language minority students and monolingual Americans, depending on their accessibility. Assistance among classmates often extended to copying written work.

Asking Classmates to Answer Questions About Class Content, Procedures, and English

Interviewees described a language-proficiency hierarchy among second language students. They could consistently name the persons in their classes who were most likely to understand the teacher and who would therefore be the most logical sources of information about class content, procedures, and English. Students' ranking in this hierarchy varied from class to class depending on how their language skills compared to those of their classmates. José, for example, could name the three students in his ESL 1 class who would most likely be able to help him: "I ask the three of them (Claudio, Ana, Susana) for help because I think they know as much as I do or maybe more" (JT, I2, 3). José was willing, on the other hand, to offer help to students in his Life Skills class who had arrived more recently from Mexico. He explained: "When I can, I help them...Most of the students know less English that I do" (JT, I1, 2).

Interviewees at all English levels were willing to help each other even if it meant facing the disapproval of teachers. The following are two typical examples cited by Margarita (ESL 3):

> Last year when I had typing, there was a girl who didn't know English, and I had begun to speak it already. She used to say to me, "I don't understand. Help me. Tell me what I have to do." At first I could tell that this used to bother the teacher. Then I told her that she [student] didn't understand English. After that she would say to me, "It's okay..." And I used to explain to her what we had to do. (MD, I1, 8)

The second example shared by Margarita took place in a different classroom where the economics teacher did not encourage this support among students:

> Angelina doesn't know how to read well. She has problems. It [the text] is a little difficult. She understands English, but I think that she needs help because she doesn't understand some words. Even if they are real simple ones, she doesn't understand them. Sometimes Mr. Lopez scolds me and tells me not to talk in class, but I'm not talking. I'm explaining to Angelina what the lesson is about. (MD, I2, 10)

Although interviewees said they knew that non-Spanish-speaking language minority students could give them academic help, beginning and intermediate students expressed a hesitance to request such help for fear of not phrasing the question correctly or expressed a hesitance to request such help for fear of not phrasing the question correctly or not understanding the response. Genoveva (ESL 1), for example, was concerned about talking to Japanese and Indian students: "Those right next to me speak only English so I wouldn't know how to ask them" (GM, I1, 12). Yolanda (ESL 2) was worried about understanding Tongans: "I ask a friend who understands English better. There are four or five students who are better in English than I am. There are two from Hawaii [sic]. I don't ask them because I don't understand them" (YA, I3, 3).

Co-researchers with greater confidence speaking English described learning strategies which included contacts with non-Spanish-speaking classmates. One advanced ESL and one post-ESL student reported non-Spanish-speaking ESL students to be among their best friends whom they regularly consulted with questions about class content and English.

Four students, one in ESL 3 and three in regular English classes, stated that they were comfortable communicating with monolingual Americans for academic purposes. This help ranged from asking questions about English to having Americans copy test answers from them, as Cecilia ("post-ESL") explained: "Sometimes Susie doesn't do her work, and when we take a test, sometimes she copies from me. Since I memorize things, she copies from me, but I talk to her sometimes" (CM, I2, 4) Marco ("post-ESL") also mentioned sharing ideas with monolingual Americans: "[In science class there is a boy] sometimes he doesn't understand. Well, I tell him, and sometimes he helps me. We help each other to do the work better" (MN, I2, 1).

Competence and confidence in English were not the only factors which enabled some co-researchers to interact with monolingual Americans. Access was a key issue. Because of their class schedules, most of the students in ESL 1 and ESL 2 had very few opportunities to talk to monolingual Americans. Four of the interviewees who were still in ESL classes stated that they felt they could make faster progress if they had more opportunities to speak to monolingual Americans.

Asking Classmates to Copy Their Written Work

When I asked co-researchers about the many times I had seen students copying assignments and tests, they acknowledged that this is one of the ways in which *compañeros* often help each other. Several of them stated, that no-one learns anything by copying, but that most students did it anyway. Genoveva offered this explanation:

> Genoveva: [In Mexico] there weren't many who had good grades...There weren't many because the others just got by...They didn't study. They were copying...Here,it seems to me that they copy [too]. They tell me that they're not, that they're copying because they don't know English. Anyway, it's bad because if they copy they're not going to learn English...So I try to understand the words so that I can do my work.
> Researcher: I can tell that you work hard, but yesterday with Victoria, you copied a little, too.
> Genoveva: Yes, I copied because I asked what we had to do.
> Researcher: It was your first class.
> Genoveva: Uh huh. So she told me that I had to look for those that belong to the kingdom, those that didn't belong, and the characteristics.
> Researcher: Okay.
> Genoveva: I didn't know what P or L meant or how to do it, so I had to copy. (GM, I2,5)

While denouncing copying, Genoveva felt she had no choice but to copy because she had not had time to read the instructions carefully in English.

I viewed dozens of instances of copying during the classes I visited. The only objection I heard was from a student who asked her friend: "Don't copy exactly" (10-30-90, 5).

Two interviewees stated they respected their biology teacher who refused to accept homework that was copied (11-29-90, 4). They explained that this teacher consistently allowed students to work cooperatively during in-class activities so that copying or cheating was often not an issue.

Contacting Teachers

Interviewees reported limited contacts with teachers to obtain help with pronunciation, spelling, definitions, and labels. They indicated that they also asked teachers for examples, explanations, and verifications. Students at all levels of language proficiency stated that they asked for all types of help, but beginning students described help-seeking instances related to concrete items. Some gender differences were suggested by female students' reported unwillingness to "bother" teachers. One interviewee reported that he had made a suggestion for a change in teaching methodologies.

Asking Teachers to Give Pronunciation, Spelling, Definitions, and Labels

Beginning students reported asking questions relating to concrete items. Samuel (ESL 1), for example, was constantly relabelling his world in English. After class when his teacher said the word "bakery" which he did not understand, he handed her a piece of paper saying, "Please write," so he could see how it was spelled. After staring at the word he said, "Please say," so he could hear it again. (10-18-90, 14). Samuel often pointed to things, thereby asking for a definition or a verification of a definition. This interchange took place between Samuel and his teacher before a Life Skills class:

> Samuel: [pointing to his face] Face?
> Teacher: Yes, face. [10-18-90, 12]

He explained during an interview that he used three words and gestures to ask this same teacher for the answers to questions he had not been able to complete on an assignment:

> She came and I told her, "Me." And I pointed to the paper and said, "No." Of hose that I had answered I said, "Yes, no, yes." "Okay, Samuel" she told me. "Okay. Tomorrow,"she told me, "tomorrow the class." I don't remember how she said, "*contestar* [to answer]." SD, I1, 5)

Asking Teachers to Give Examples, Explanations, and Verifications

Instances of students' questions requesting examples, explanations, and verifications are cited in Chapter 5 as part of the discussion of students' use of English with teachers for academic purposes.

Co-researchers were divided about when they would ask a teacher for academic assistance. If placed on a continuum their opinions ranged from Samuel's statement of strong dependence on teachers to Margarita's opinion that teachers should be questioned only when all others resources fail to help.

Samuel was the only interviewee who consistently relied on the help of teachers before that of his classmates. "When I don't understand, I call the teacher. I raise my hand like this" (SD, I1, 5). He had questions before class, after class, and during class for each of his teachers. He was one of only two interviewees who said he had asked for teachers' help outside of class time. The following situation he described with his Life Skills teacher is typical of his interactions with teachers during class: "And I said to her, 'Teacher, come on please.' That's what I said so she would come because she was going the other way" (SD, I1, 5).

Margarita (ESL 3), on the other end of the spectrum, expressed the most hesitancy about "bothering" teachers and responded in class only when called on:

> [I speak English] with teachers if I have questions...I try to understand them as much as I can, by myself, so that I don't bother them...If I already understand why should I ask them? Lots of students understand and only want to be asking. Well, I don't know-- What I see is that they are bothering them. They do the work...They understand, and then just to be asking a question. (MD, I2, 3)

Bárbara's opinion was typical of that of most interviewees: "[If I don't understand what the teacher says] I ask one of my classmates and she tells me. If she doesn't know either, I ask the teacher" (BT, I1,4).

Co-researchers' statements suggested gender differences in their learning strategies with teachers All of the male interviewees, with the exception of José, were more assertive in asking teachers questions. A physical science teacher had this to say about Antonio (ESL 3):

> Antonio was the top student in all of my classes for the first three chapters...He is the only one in all my classes who comes up and asks me to explain something he got wrong on a test. None of my other students would do that.(11-29-90, 7)

Yolanda (ESL 2), like all female interviewees except one, expressed reservations about asking some of her teachers for help: "I have [problems] in math when I don't understand the teacher. I'm not sure of what he will do, and I feel he will yell at me. That's why I hardly every ask him" (YA, I3, 4).

Asking Teachers to Change Teaching Methods

One co-researcher became comfortable enough in his classroom that his learning strategies included asking a teacher to change his teaching methods. Gabriel explained the following situation in his sheltered U.S. history class:

> He gives us the lesson and we have to do it. Two or three weeks ago with Mr. Chavez,...he was telling us, "Okay, open your books to such and such a page." He was saying, "Read and answer the questions." And we were doing it. But one time I said to him, "Mr. Chavez, why, why do you explain it to us after we do it, answer the questions and everything. We make mistakes, and don't understand, and only then comes the explanation." One time I told him, "Mr. Chavez, why isn't it the reverse--first you explain the lesson and after we answer the questions on our own?" I said, "We don't speak English, and we don't understand real well. It's logical that we are going to answer the questions wrong." I said, "Isn't it better to explain it so we understand it and that we then answer the questions?" At first he said no. When I said that to him in front of the group, and the group said, "Oh, yes." He said, "No, let's keep going." But later he did what we asked him. He explains the lesson and then we answer the questions. (GD, I3, 10)

Gabriel explained to me that he felt he could only have made this request in Spanish because he would not have known how to phrase it in English. He also stated that he could only have made it to a teacher with whom he had built up a rapport.

Contacting Aides

Capital High had one adult teacher aide and as many Spanish-speaking student aides as could be recruited. Interviewees in ESL 1 reported contacts with one adult aide and five Spanish-speaking student aides as a regular part of their learning strategies. Aides were asked questions about class content and procedure when communication with teachers was difficult or unsuccessful or when communication with teachers was non-existent.

Interviewees stated that all aides circulated around classrooms making themselves accessible for questioning.

Genoveva explained that she consulted the adult aide when she did not know how to ask a question in English: "When I don't understand, I ask Mrs. Martin. If I don't know how to ask her [teacher] in English, I ask the *señora* in Spanish" (GM, I1, 5).

José spoke of asking student aides when he did not understand teachers' instructions. He did not mention an intermediary step of trying to phrase a question in English. "There is a young guy in there who speaks English and Spanish so that when we really don't understand the teacher, we ask the guy who speaks Spanish" (JT, I1, 5).

Genoveva explained that her only instructional contacts in her art class were with a bilingual student aide in Spanish: "There's a girl who speaks English and Spanish and who explains [things] to us. It's the girl who tells us what we have to do. We don't talk to the teacher--only to the girl" (GM, I1, 14).

Self-Help in Class

Students used self-help strategies in and out of the classroom. Co-researchers explained that their classroom learning strategies included watching and listening to the teacher, copying notes given during teachers' presentations, and using texts and dictionaries.

Watching and Listening Carefully to Teacher

Co-researchers explained that listening to teachers speak English was an exhausting job that was made easier by teachers' use of visual input. Students described how they had understood words that were repeated while teachers modelled archery and volleyball skills in PE (10-16-90, 8) or typing (MD, I1, 7). In his Life Skills class, I watched as Samuel sat on the edge of his seat mouthing words as the teacher moved grocery items to different positions on shelves. He then carefully copied every preposition she had written on an overhead transparency (10-18-90, 12).

Taking Notes from Teachers' Presentations

Co-researchers said they depended on notes for a basic understanding of class presentations. When I asked Adriana if she had understood her algebra teacher's presentation, she said, "Yes, I understand, but I have to concentrate. I write everything down. It's quite hard for me." During the lesson in question, I noted that she had concentrated on the blackboard as she listened to the teacher with her head cocked to one side and then to the other. She copied, erased, and copied more notes onto her paper (12-10-90, 1-2).

In a U.S. history class, I noted that students hurried to copy notes outlining differences between Republicans and Democrats. A loud "Oh----" went up from the group as the teacher quickly erased what the students had barely begun to write. The teacher continued with his mini-lecture. (12-3-90, 7)

Bárbara (ESL 3) explained her frustrations as one of a handful of second-language students in a fast-paced government class. While presenting the functions and structures of Congress, the teacher jotted a few words on the board. Bárbara copied every word even though she later explained that the overhead projector blocked her view and the teacher's handwriting was difficult to read. The teacher's historical anecdotes were lost on her as indicated by her comments after class: "I will read the book to help me understand what he wrote on the board. I didn't understand most of what he said. He speaks too fast" (11-28-90, 13).

Using Texts and Dictionaries

Most co-researchers did not use dictionaries as a self-help strategy in class. Although four students used them and talked about them as part of lessons planned by their English teachers, Yolanda (ESL 2) was the only one of the interviewees who discussed and whom I observed using a personal dictionary in class (11-7-90, 5).

Self-Help out of Class

Co-researchers reported that their self-help strategies at home included using dictionaries, getting help from family members, doing extra writing in English, doing extra reading in English, and studying "until it sticks."

Using Dictionaries

Three co-researchers indicated that they used dictionaries regularly at home. Nine of the students said they sometimes used dictionaries if there were no friends or family members available to ask what a word meant. Only two of the interviewees said that they never used dictionaries. Genoveva said she relied exclusively on vocabulary lists from classes and help from her cousins with words she did not know. Claudio simply said that he did like to use dictionaries.

Marco was one of the three who used dictionaries as a matter of course. He phrased it this way:

> I find a quiet place. I start to read, read. I look up the words I don't know in the dictionary. After that I know what it means. I learn it. Well, the good thing is that...it's easy. I have the ability to learn quickly. (MN, I2, 7)

Yolanda said she could not remember words she had looked up, but that she continued to use the dictionary occasionally:

> When I don't understand a word, I look it up and use it in the reading. The next time I find another word I don't know I look it up. Things stick but afterwards, I

> don't know, I forget them. When I see the word again, I say to myself, "I know what it means," but I don't remember. And I look it up again. (YA, I3, 7)

Getting Help from Family Members

Nine co-researchers stated that they often involved family members in their homework. Informants explained that they usually asked younger siblings and cousins about words since they thought their younger relatives spoke English better than they did. Older relatives, they explained, were sometimes able to help but were often at work. Margarita, for example, said she often asked her brother-in-law, who was a school teacher in Mexico, for help: "I ask him to help me. If not, I have a dictionary at home and I try to figure it out in Spanish. After that I think about it in English" (MD, I1, 12).

Doing "Extra" Reading and Writing in English

Some co-researchers explained that they did extra reading and writing in English in addition to doing their regular homework and studying for tests. Samuel (ESL 1) described his own system for writing and remembering vocabulary:

> I take out a piece of paper, and I say: "I'm going to write what I know. I figure out what know and what I don't know. And I begin to write everything--and that's how I'm learning. (SD, I1, 2)

Yolanda (ESL 2) stated she was doing worksheets that her father had saved from his adult English classes. "He told me to learn a little more English" (YA, I2, 7).

Samuel reported that he reads everything that he can in English, including the grocery ads:

> When my father goes to the market, that's the time I get the flyer with the specials...I figure out...things that I don't know. For example, if I didn't know what beef was...how you write it...a word that interests me. Well, all of the words interest me. But those that I decide to learn quickly, I ask my sister, "What does beef mean?" "*Carne*," she tells me. Like that--little words. (SD, I2, 5)

Cecilia ("post-ESL") explained that she used to do more extra reading in English: "Not so much anymore, but I used to start studying English [at home], reading a book that we have. I tried to study a little and learn a little more " (CM, I1, 14)

Studying "Until It Sticks"

Interviewees explained that regular homework assignments and studying for tests took from fifteen minutes to an hour for them to complete each night. They said that they could often complete their work during class time given them by teachers. The notable exception was Ramón who stated that his honors classes required about two hours of homework per night, longer when projects were due:

> Sometimes I come home lazy after playing [soccer], and I'm tired and don't start studying, but one day before, or two days before a paper or whatever is due, I start to study a lot" (RF, I1, 5)

All but two of the interviewees said they were willing to study "until it sticks."

Summary of students' learning strategies.

Interviewees described a variety of learning strategies that they used at Capital High. They indicated that Spanish-speaking classmates were their primary source of help with class content and procedures. Teachers were consulted occasionally but some interviewees, especially females, expressed a hesitation to "bother" them. Aides were only available for ESL 1 students who reported consulting them. All co-researchers described self-help strategies in class which included paying careful attention to teachers' oral and visual input and taking notes. Self-help strategies at home included dictionary use, help from family members, and extra reading and writing, as well as assigned homework.

Discussion of Theme One: What Students Say About Themselves as Second Language Learners

The monolithic image of Mexican immigrants has been challenged by researchers (Durán, 1983; Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Suarez-Orozco, 1987, 1989; Trueba, 1989) and disputed by a recent Rand Corporation study (McDonnell, 1991). Interviewees' statements provide additional evidence that Mexican immigrants must be educated as individuals with unique backgrounds and needs. Although participants were selected on the basis of high motivation and similar educational levels, the interview process revealed details of their varied geographic and socio-economic backgrounds which influenced their English language experiences in Mexico, their reasons for learning English, their progress and problems with English, and their learning strategies.

Some participants came from urban areas of Mexico where English-speakers are more likely to be found; others grew up in ranchos or fishing villages. Some had families who were able to afford private schools; others had gone to public schools. Although eleven of them had studied English at least twice a week for two years in Mexico all said they arrived from Mexico with no proficiency in English

Interviewees' goals indicated integrative motivation for language learning (Gardner & Lambert, 1972; Krashen, 1981a) and a strong desire to communicate (Macnamara, 1973). Their motivation for learning English was linked to their reasons for coming to the U.S.: three of them stated that they came here to be reunited with family members, but all others said they came on their own or with their families to go to school and "have a better life." Their statements echo those of Mexican immigrants in the study by Matute-Bianchi (1986) who said that they came to the United States for primarily economic reasons. Students' economic goals were tied to English proficiency as explained by Gabriel: "There are jobs where you don't need English, but I would like to work in a good place, have a good job" (GD, I1, 6).

Students described part-time jobs as a fact of life which affected their study time. Their concerns over financial responsibilities echoed the opinion of Norma Cantu, director of educational programs for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), who cited "language and money" as the major obstacles to Latinos' educational success in American schools (Merl, 1991).

All of the co-researchers described families that supported them morally if not financially in their academic and linguistic goals. The only exceptions to this were two male interviewees who were separated from their nuclear families living in Mexico and were not getting encouragement for their studies from members of their extended family in the U.S.. Interviewees' statements of parental support for their educational goals offered additional evidence against a cultural deprivation explanation of Latino drop-out rates that have already been convincingly countered by Brischetto & Arciniega (1973); Carter & Segura (1979); Gamez (1979); Ramírez & Castañeda (1974), among others.

Co-researchers reported that their families allowed them to choose if they wanted to study or work. If they chose to study, students reported no family pressure to enter prestigious fields or professions. One girl was encouraged by her mother to be a teacher, another by her father to be a doctor. All others said that their parents left the choice up to them, in a pattern of concern without intervention that had begun in Mexico.

Comments by female interviewees indicated, however, that their parents' expectations for them included early marriages. Their statements were supported by Mrs. Vasquez, a Latina teacher at Capital High who shared her perspective on this issue:

> I wish I could say that it weren't true, but education is seen as wasted on girls since they "just" get married. I've talked to too many parents who see no point in their daughters continuing school, I've had many really bright girls who finally get married just to leave situations at home where they have to go to work in a factory. (12-4-90, 1)

With one exception, all co-researchers indicated that neither they nor their families knew about career options available to them. This does not mean that these students were unaware of the economic and social realities facing them in California. The following comment made by Gabriel was applauded by other interviewees: "It's not what I want to be. It's what I can be" (5-91). His statement is typical of those which suggest that these recent immigrants have begun to internalize the economic and social ceilings experienced by Mexican Americans (Ogbu 1987a, 1987b, 1988).

Interviewees' doubts about their ability to succeed in American society were fueled by their perceived lack of progress in English. They expressed frustration about not making faster progress in the language skill areas: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Although they felt they had made the most gains in their comprehension skills, the problems they continued to experience were among those cited as common to older language learners for whom native speakers did not sufficiently modify speech patterns or offer enough non-verbal cues (Hatch, 1983; Krashen, 1981b, 1983, 1985; Wong-Fillmore, 1985a).

If language input was at a reasonable rate and accompanied by visual input, students explained that it was easier for them to draw on their conceptual knowledge in Spanish which, in some cases, was extensive. Their statements supported the Common Underlying Proficiency Theory (CUP) as posited in Cummins' Interdependence Hypothesis which maintains that knowledge learned in one language can be transferred to all other languages and that it is easier to understand concepts in a second language after they have been learned in the first (Cummins, 1980, 1981).

Swain (1985) and Wong-Fillmore (1985a) discussed the importance of target language speakers who provide access to the language frequently enough for learning to occur. Co-researchers at all levels reported that they had very limited opportunity or need to speak English either inside or outside of the classroom. Most felt they had memorized isolated words but could not use them appropriately because of a lack of modeling and practice. In some cases, their description of language usage suggested strong reliance on what Krashen (1977, 1981a, 1982a) termed a monitor which edits language via learned rules. In these instances, students' proficiency was limited because they relied on learned rather than acquired language.

Pronunciation was of major concern to these older language learners who were sometimes laughed at by their Spanish-speaking peers or asked to repeat things by native speakers. Most of them said they lacked the confidence to speak to monolingual Americans. Some stated that they preferred speaking English to non-Spanish-speakers even though they could not yet speak at what they considered to be a normal conversational speed.

Co-researchers equated oral reading with both speaking and reading English. Their perceptions were shared by a world history teacher: "In my sheltered classes we read everything aloud. I figure they're getting their English that way every day" (11-26-90, 5). Current research shows that the value of spending long periods of class time for students' oral reading is questionable, especially at the beginning levels where teachers often engage in what Krashen (1981b, 1983) explained as the useless and often damaging process of overcorrecting pronunciation. Goodman (1986) and Heald-Taylor (1989) also suggest that it is unwise to assume that students understand what is read orally without pre-reading or post-reading activities.

Reading skills were of major concern to students, especially those in ESL 3 and regular English classes who were often faced with challenging reading assignments in compacted course loads the year before graduation. They talked of receiving little help from teachers whom they described as unaware of their reading problems in a second language. Often under time pressures, interviewees said that they struggled with technical vocabulary and with basic comprehension and retention of ideas. They explained that they often resorted to copying passages directly from books because they did not understand them well enough to rewrite them in their own words.

Cummins (1980, 1984) theorized that it is easier to understand language in context-reduced, cognitively demanding situations requiring CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency) if BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills) have already been developed. Cummins stated that older language learners usually develop the ability to communicate socially in about two years if they get appropriate amounts and types of input from fluent speakers of the target language. Thirteen interviewees said they were unable to communicate effectively for social purposes.

Two reported that they were able to function academically in English but not socially. Genoveva surprised teachers with her academic literacy skills in English (CALP), even though she could not maintain a social conversation. Antonio admitted he was much more comfortable with written academic work than social interactions. According to J. Cummins (personal communication, March 1990), older language learners who have been educated in their first language, like the co-researchers in this study, are often able to make the academic conceptual tranfers he posited in his Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis, even though their BICS are still developing.

Cummins (1984) stressed the importance of meaning in oral and written language. Like whole language advocates such as Goodman (1986) and Heald-Taylor (1989), he stated that language learners are much more efficient if they understand over-all meaning before focusing on isolated words. Co-researchers explained that they were often given no guidance in over-all meaning before they were asked to recall discrete words or facts that they had read. As a result, they reported that they were very frustrated in their attempts to explain main ideas or supporting facts.

The additional pressures of timed in-class reading, writing, and tests were discussed by interviewees as significant barriers to comprehension. It can be argued, of course, that problems with time constraints are not peculiar to second language students. Co-researchers' experiences, however, support the research findings of Dulay and Burt (1977) and Krashen (1981a, 1981b, 1982a, 1985) which stated that classroom pressures raise students' socio-affective filter that inhibits the language acquisition process. Interviewees comments further suggest that repeated failure to achieve "acceptable" results on these in-class assignments and tests were reducing students' self-esteem and motivation to continue in school.

Interviewees discussed problems in writing English that ranged from handwriting to discourse analysis. Beginning students talked about not being comfortable writing cursive script. Two ESL teachers also mentioned handwriting as a problem which they attempted to solve by having students spend class time copying words in cursive handwriting. Valuable classroom time is best spent on linguistic input and interaction (Cummins 1981, 1983; Krashen, 1980, 1981a, 1982a, 1985; Swain, 1985; Wong-

Fillmore, 1985). Although both Mexican culture and American culture dictate that a signature should be in cursive writing, printing is adequate for any other type of written communication in the U.S. provided that immigrants can read handwritten materials.

The writing experiences and problems related by twelve out of fourteen interviewees were confined to mechanics: spelling, punctuation, grammar. Whole language programs for both first and second language learners, encourage writing for communication (Goodman, 1986; Heald-Taylor, 1989). Reading does more to correct mechanical errors and to acquire new vocabulary than repeated use of red pencils (Krashen, 1984).

Two students expressed other types of writing concerns. Ramón, the honors student, indicated an awareness of appropriate style and discourse patterns as discussed by Montaño-Harmon (1989). Gabriel (ESL 2) stated that he wanted to write about topics that were important and useful. Gabriel's type of concerns were discussed by Freire (1987) and Freire & Macedo (1987) who argued that literacy should be used to help students change the realities of their world that have a negative impact on their lives.

Learning strategies discussed by students included seeking help from classmates, teachers, and self-help strategies. Co-researchers stated that Spanish-speaking classmates were their primary source of academic help, including assistance with class content, procedures, and English. Interviewees explained that they could rank their *compañeros* according to their knowledge of subject matter and English. After the first few months in school, students explained that they were not as desperate in needing this help in Spanish. They stated they were simply more comfortable working things out with friends, sometimes to the point of copying work exactly. Interviewees' statements strongly support Kagan's (1986) theories about the benefits of cooperative learning.

Non-Spanish-speaking immigrant students were consulted infrequently by interviewees still in ESL classes who stated that they could not phrase academic questions in English.

Thirteen students complained of insufficient interactions with monolingual Americans for either academic or social purposes. Students statements suggest they would benefit from greater access to monolingual Americans earlier in their educational programs.

Interviewees said that teachers' main function was to present lessons. With one exception, all co-researchers asked fellow students for help before turning to the teacher. Interviewees stated that they occasionally asked instructors to model pronunciation and spelling and to give definitions and labels. Interviewees also said that they relied on teachers for examples, explanation, and verifications.

Male interviewees described more instances of probing for teachers' ideas or asking questions to erase their "doubts." All female participants, except one, stated they were hesitant to approach some teachers and would only ask questions if they were "important" ones. Only one co-researcher asked a teacher to change his teaching strategies.

Co-researchers reported in-class self-help strategies: they listened carefully to teachers who often spoke too quickly; they watched teachers closely for gestures and visual clues which included use of blackboard use, maps, pictures, and demonstrations.

Interviewees' statements suggest that their enthusiasm for self-help strategies outside of the classroom was cyclical. They explained that as recently arrived immigrants, they were likely to look for opportunities to understand and speak as well as to do extra reading and writing in English. Intermediate and advanced students expressed frustration over their perceived lack of progress. The out-of-class learning strategies they described were primarily social and involved getting help from friends and younger family members.

Thirteen interviewees were worried that their efforts would not make them competent enough in English to graduate or continue their studies after high school. Although intermediate and advanced students had already defied statistics by not dropping out after a year or two of secondary school, they could not understand why they had landed on a linguistic plateau after a long, uphill struggle. Only Ramón, after having spent six years in the United States, seemed confident of his abilities to function in English, and even he stated that he considered his literacy skills to be weaker than his academic preparation for university studies.

Co-researchers statements about themselves as language learners showed that they are highly motivated to learn English and that they are using appropriate strategies. Interviewees' descriptions, however, suggested that they are not often getting comprehensible input or sufficient opportunities for two-way interaction in English. Students' language choice patterns, therefore, will be discussed and analyzed in the following chapter.

Chapter 6

REPORT OF THE FINDINGS: THEME 2

WHAT STUDENTS SAY ABOUT THEIR CURRENT USE OF ENGLISH

"Cada quien busca alguién con quien se pueda entender, un amigo con quien entenderse--y se juntan." (RQ, I2, 2)

"Everyone looks for someone he can communicate with, a friend he can get along with-and they get together." (RQ, I2,2)

The second theme examined was Mexican immigrant students' use of English in their everyday lives, especially at school. By interviewing fourteen co-researchers and observing their linguistic interactions during school hours, I learned with whom and under what conditions they chose to communicate in English. Each of the participants was also asked to keep a language log during the period between their two formal interviews.

I did not evaluate or analyze co-researchers' language usage except to note if it was used for academic (formal) or social (informal) purposes. Student or teacher interchanges that pertained to an instructional lesson were termed "language for academic purposes." Any other interchanges were labelled "language for social purposes." Since this study also examined language use outside of the classroom, the distinction between academic and social purposes was extended to refer to these functions in any context.

Findings related to interviewees' use of English will be discussed under the following sub-themes: A) in the community , B) at work, C) at home, D) in class at school, and E) outside of class at school. All of the information relating to sub-themes A, B, and C was provided by co-researchers during interviews. Although I accompanied Margarita to her workplace that was part of the school's Regional Occupational Program (ROP) and Ramón to a school-sponsored soccer game that was held off-campus, it was beyond the scope of this study to observe students' linguistic interactions systematically in the community, at work, or at home.

The discussion of each of the sub-themes for Theme 2 will be preceded by an outline of the categories, properties, and, in some cases, sub-properties relating to the sub-theme.

Following is an outline of the findings reported in Theme 2 (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Theme 2: What students say about their current use of English.

A. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH IN THE COMMUNITY

1. Students' use of English with neighbors
   - a. No contacts in English
   - b. Relations sometimes strained
   - c. Limited to extensive contacts in Spanish
2. Students' use of English in stores
   - a. Sometimes use Spanish
   - b. Sometimes use English
3. Students' use of English for medical and public services: Always use English

B. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT WORK

1. Students' use of English with bosses
   - a. Often use English even if bosses are bilingual
   - b. Sometimes use Spanish if bosses are bilingual
2. Students' use of English with co-workers
   - a. Rarely use English if co-workers are bilingual
   - b. Most often use Spanish if co-workers are bilingual
3. Students' use of English with customers
   - a. Sometimes use English even if customers are bilingual
   - b. Sometimes use Spanish if customers are bilingual

C. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT HOME

1. Students' use of English with parents, aunts, uncles
   - a. Most often use Spanish
   - b. Rarely use English
2. Students' use of English with siblings and cousins
   - a. Often use Spanish
   - b. Sometimes use English
3. Students' use of English with reading materials and TV
   - a. Both English and Spanish TV programs watched
   - b. Reading materials in both English and Spanish often limited

4. Students' use of English for correspondence and phone calls
    - a. Most often use English
    - b. Sometimes use Spanish

D. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT SCHOOL

1. Students' use of English with students from Spanish-speaking countries
    - a. Students' use of English for academic purposes
        - i. Most often use Spanish
        - ii. Rarely use English
            - -Except in highly structured activities
            - -Except for common expressions
            - -Except in classes with many native speakers of English
    - b. Students' use of English for social purposes
        - i. Most often use Spanish
        - ii. Sometimes mix Spanish and English
        - iii. A few individuals try to communicate in English
    - c. Students' problem communicating in English: Often teased
2. Students' use of English with Mexican Americans
    - a. Students' use of English for academic and social purposes
        - i. Most often speak Spanish
        - ii. Speak English with non-Spanish speakers
        - iii. Relations often unfriendly
3. Students' use of English with students from non-Spanish-speaking countries
    - a. Students' use of English for academic purposes: Limited communication in English
    - b. Students' use of English for social purposes
        - i. Limited to extensive communication in English
        - ii. Limited communication in Spanish
    - c. Benefits and problems communicating with non-native English speakers
4. Students' use of English with monolingual American students
    - a. No opportunity for contacts in ESL/sheltered content classes
    - b. Limited contacts in regular classes
        - i. Because of traditional teaching methodologies
        - ii. Because of students' ethnic grouping patterns
    - c. Limited contacts through individual initiative or school activities
    - d. Successful contacts through football and soccer programs
    - e. Benefits and problems communicating with monolingual Americans
5. Students' use of English with teachers
    - a. Students' use of English for academic purposes
        - i. Most often use English with monolingual teachers
        - ii. Sometimes use interpreters w/monolingual teachers
        - iii. Consistently use Spanish with some bilingual teachers
    - b. Students' use of English for social purposes
        - i. Limited contacts in English with some monolingual teachers
        - ii. Limited contacts in Spanish with some bilingual teachers
6. Students' use of English with aides: Most often use Spanish with bilingual aides
7. Students' use of English with counselors
    - a. Most often use Spanish with bilingual counselors
    - b. often fear miscommunication with monolingual counselors

Students' Use of English in the Community

A. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH IN THE COMMUNITY

1. Students' use of English with neighbors
   a. No contacts in English
   b. Relations sometimes strained
   c. Limited to extensive contacts in Spanish
2. Students' use of English in stores
   a. Sometimes use Spanish
   b. Sometimes use English
3. Students' use of English for medical and public services: Always use English

One of the questions asked during interviews was: When do you use English? In response, co-researchers described limited use of English in their community for shopping and medical services. Students reported that they only communicated with neighbors who spoke Spanish.

Students' Use of English with Neighbors

Four interviewees reported that they lived in "unfriendly" neighborhoods where they did not communicate with their neighbors. Ten stated that they occasionally greeted Spanish-speaking neighbors and had regular contacts with some of them. None mentioned any interactions with neighbors in English.

Students' Use of English in Stores

Students said they were most likely to use English in the community during shopping trips. The importance of shopping as an impetus for the use of English varied with each family's need to use children as English interpreters and the availability of stores with Spanish-speaking clerks.

All of the co-researchers stated that they did some shopping in English although the frequency of these experiences varied. One student said he never went shopping, except to buy ice cream and candy, since his relatives provided his food, and he sent all of his money to Mexico (AN, I1, 7). Five others described trips to stores as frequent social activities that they included among their first memories of the U.S..

Students Depended on Others to Communicate in English in Stores

Newly arrived students said they did not use English in stores, preferring to depend on friends or relatives to talk to clerks. Genoveva (ESL 1) stated that she never went shopping alone (GM, I1, 8). Samuel (ESL 1) said he was "picking up English" from just listening to his father talk to clerks in English (SD, I2, 16).

Students Sometimes Used English in Stores

Some students reported that their relatives used shopping as a way of urging them to learn English. Yolanda explained:

> They tell me I have to pay more attention to what they're telling me so that I can learn English faster and go to the store and if I want something I can ask what they have, how much it costs, or something like that. (YA, I1, 11)

Interviewees talked about their parents depending on them as interpreters: "[When we go to the stores with my parents] my brother and sister and I do the talking" (BT, I1, 9). The following description suggests that siblings rank themselves as interpreters according to factors which include language ability, gender, age, or personality differences, none of which have been examined in this study:

> Sometimes we go [shopping] with my brothers, and I don't speak English. If my mother wants something, she asks me. If we go with my brother, I always let my brother say everything. If my mother and I go alone, well, I try to do it.
> (MD, I1, 14)

Students Sometimes used Spanish in Stores

Interviewees commented on the availability of Spanish-speaking clerks in stores. Three interviewees reported using Spanish with their customers at their places of employment. Students mentioned that part of their role as interpreters for their parents was to determine if Spanish-speaking employees were available. Adriana described a typical situation: "You know that they speak Spanish in many stores--in most of them now...If it's in Spanish, well, my mother talks, but I go first to find out if they speak Spanish or not" (AE, I1, 3).

Students' Use of English for Medical Services

Four co-researchers explained that their hesitancy to speak English in the community extended to situations in which their families needed linguistic help to obtain medical services. Gabriel, for example, stated that he "just had to do the best he could in English" when he brought his mother to the hospital (10-26-90, 8).

Antonio explained his obligations and reactions as interpreter in this way:

> My uncle often brought me with him to the doctor's or things like that because he thought that I would understand more of what they were saying. I got nervous. I never wanted to go, but he would make me go with him. Well, the doctor--what he said I would tell him [uncle] in Spanish. I got very nervous. (AN, I1, 7)

Antonio's "straight-A" report card was proof that he was proficient in using English for academic purposes, but the following description demonstrated that he had problems asking a doctor's receptionist where a room was located:

> I was so nervous about asking that I knocked over her nameplate. I should add that I almost even knocked the telephone over [but] I asked her and she told me where it [room] was. (AN, I1, 7)

Summary of students' use of English in the community.

Interviewees' comments about their use of English in the community indicated that they only spoke English when they felt that there was no-one else to do what had to be done. They explained that there were not many of these situations where English usage was vital and that they did not consciously look for places to practice English.

Shopping provided all interviewees with at least an occasional need to use English. Four students reported that they had acted as interpreters for their families for medical services. All of the students, except Ramón, said they were unsure of their ability to perform basic language functions in English in a community setting.

Students' Use of English At Work

B. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT WORK

1. Students' use of English with bosses
    a. Often use English if they are bilingual
    b. Sometimes use Spanish if they are bilingual
2. Students' use of English with co-workers
    a. Rarely use English if they are bilingual
    b. Most often use Spanish if they are bilingual
3. Students' use of English with customers
    a. Sometimes use English if they are bilingual
    b. Sometimes use Spanish if they are bilingual

Four of the five interviewees with part-time jobs reported a need to communicate in English at their workplaces. Although they indicated that they often spoke Spanish with their co-workers, these four students explained that not all of their bosses or customers were bilingual.

Students' Use of English with Bosses and Co-Workers

Only one of the five co-researchers with part-time jobs said that he used Spanish exclusively at work:

> [Where I work only the manager doesn't speak Spanish] but I hardly ever have to work with her. I start at four, and she goes home at four. Everyone else speaks Spanish--the owners of the store, the cashiers, the customers, everybody. (AN, I1, 7)

The four other interviewees with jobs reported that their bilingual co-workers usually spoke Spanish to them to explain their bosses' instructions or customers requests during the course of a workday. Bárbara's statement was typical:

> Three of the people [who work with me] are bilingual and about four of them aren't...I speak more Spanish than English with them because they say that they feel bad speaking English with me. I tell them...to speak to me in English because it's better for me, but they tell me they feel bad, that they like speaking Spanish better. (BT, I1, 3)

Students' Use of English With Customers

Interviewees stated that they were proudest of their achievements in speaking English with customers. Gabriel claimed he spoke more English at work than at school: "I'm more pressured there because when we make pizzas the customers ask me, they ask me for things, so it's necessary to speak English" (GC, I1, 4). He explained the language acquisition process in this way:

> At my job, it's like I'm studying because I hear it [English], and some things...I don't know...make me want to learn what they mean, and I ask, and little by little that's how I'm going to speak. (GC, I1, 9)

María was proud of her ability to answer customers' questions in either Spanish or English:

> Researcher: At Ross, do you often talk to customers who speak English?
> Margarita: Only when they have a question about the price of clothes or when they want to know where to find different types of clothes.
> Researcher: Can you answer them?
> Margarita: Yes, I get nervous, but I can answer them...There are also lots of Latinos who go to Ross. They say to me, "Hey, do you speak Spanish?" "Yes, I do," I tell them. And I try to help them, too, in Spanish... (MD, I2, 6)

Summary of students' use of English at work.

All employed interviewees reported that the number of Spanish-speakers in the community where Capital High is located enabled them to continue using Spanish with their bilingual bosses, co-workers, and customers. Three out of the four students with jobs described workplaces which offered opportunities and motivation for co-researchers to communicate in English, especially with customers.

Students' Use of English at Home

C. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT HOME

1. Students' use of English with parents, aunts, uncles
    a. Most often use Spanish
    b. Rarely use English
2. Students' use of English with siblings and cousins
    a. Often use Spanish
    b. Sometimes use English
3. Students' use of English with reading materials and TV
    a. Both English and Spanish TV programs watched
    b. Reading materials in both English and Spanish often limited
4. Students' use of English for correspondence and phone calls
    a. Most often use English
    b. Sometimes use Spanish

Interviewees' language usage with family members was divided along generational lines. All fourteen stated that they spoke Spanish almost exclusively with parents or aunts and uncles with whom they lived. They said they spoke mostly Spanish but some English with siblings and cousins in the home setting. They described a variety of both Spanish and English-language reading materials, television programs, and music as common in their homes. They reported helping parents with business correspondence and phone calls in English.

Students' use of English with Parents, Aunts, and Uncles

Yolanda's comments about home language usage were typical: "At home we speak only Spanish" (YA, I2, 1). Claudio's response was more forceful: "At home I logically speak Spanish, and English is used very little" (CE, I1, 11).

All co-researchers said that their parents spoke little or no English. They explained that their parents did not need to speak English to do their jobs well. They described their fathers as more proficient in English, even if both parents worked outside the home. Margarita described her mother's situation in this way: "My mother doesn't speak English at all. She's old. She's fifty-two years old...She's old to go back and begin to learn English. It wouldn't be easy for her now" (MD, I1, 13). Two interviewees stated that they had a parent who had started to study English but had withdrawn from classes because he was too tired after work.

Three out of the four students who lived with aunts and uncles described their extended families as well established in the U.S.. Spanish was used as the language of communication in all of these households even though they described all of their uncles and two of their aunts as proficient in English.

Students' Use of English with Siblings and Cousins

Co-researchers reported speaking Spanish more than English with siblings and cousins at home. Younger siblings and cousins were described as the best English speakers in the family who often helped them with questions in English. For example, Bárbara reported:

> [Sometimes I speak English with my younger brother and sister, especially my younger sister..., in junior high] She has more opportunities to learn it. She has more time. She chats more with her friends, with her teachers. She almost doesn't have any...Spanish-speaking friends. She doesn't speak Spanish much. (BT, I1, 7)

Not all siblings were this fluent in English, but interviewees reported some communication in English with them at home.

One interviewee described his two teenage, female cousins who were born here as being very unwilling to help him with English when he arrived:

> When I first got here and didn't understand anything, I used to ask them [for help], but they didn't want to tell me...I told myself that I am never going to ask them anything. I had to do everything by myself...Nobody wanted to help me...Later they used to ask me things...about English, about how to write this or that. (AN, I2, 4)

All other informants described siblings and cousins as being their most helpful and reliable source of English assistance outside of school:

> At home, sometimes I ask my youngest brother who's the one who pretty well knows English. I ask him, and if he doesn't know, well, I ask my little cousin. He's the one who knows the most English since he was born here. (YA, I2, 2)

Interviewees indicated that parental attitude and English language proficiency determined how much English was spoken by their children at home. Bárbara explained her mother's attitude this way:

> [At home] we speak English sometimes but other times we speak Spanish because my mother says that she doesn't understand what we're saying. She wants to know what we're talking about. That's why we speak Spanish. (BT, I1, 8)

Adriana, on the other hand, said that she was comfortable speaking English with her little sisters at home because she knew her parents understood what they were saying (AE, I1, 1).

Students' Use of English with Reading Materials and Television

When questioned about languages used in reading materials, television programs, and music in their homes, students' responses varied considerably. Although all reported that they did very little reading in any language outside of school assignments, there were wide differences in the reading materials they described as available in their homes. Raúl, for example, gave this as his rationale for not reading in Spanish: "I think that I don't read anything in Spanish because I don't have books or anything in Spanish, absolutely nothing" (RQ, I2, 9). This is contrast to the eight informants who said that Spanish newspapers could be found in their homes on a fairly regular basis.

Only one student stated that English magazines could normally be found in her home; four said they received an English-language newspaper. Students stated that they occasionally read limited parts of these newspapers: an ESL 1 student said he followed football scores; a "post-ESL" student said that he read articles of interest when he had time; five students across English-proficiency levels indicated that they read advertisements. Bárbara explained advertising's appeal: "They bring a lot of brochures, for example, from the stores. If you like something, you have to read it...It's in English. I help them [parents] a lot" (BT, I1, 9).

All students except Antonio watched some television shows in English. He explained that his reasons for not watching were based on personal conflicts with his uncle's family rather than a lack of interest in television.

Situational comedies, adventure shows and sports programs were mentioned as popular in English, but favorite viewing in English included movies and cartoons. Margarita's comments were typical of those who described the universal appeal and comprehensibility of cartoons:

> Sometimes the kids put cartoons on and I sit with them to watch cartoons. And the children and I laugh about what's happening in the cartoons...and I tell them: "Do you know that when I arrived here and saw everyone laughing at what was happening on TV, I just sat there [making a blank expression on her face]? But now I know what things are all about." (MD, I2, 13)

Interviewees described some television viewing as a social event. They said *novelas*, soap operas in Spanish, were watched by all age groups. Their parents watched programs in Spanish, and interviewees said they often sat with them to be sociable: "[I watch television in Spanish] because of my mother because she watches novelas and I sit with her" (MD, I2, 13). Raúl had these same experiences with his aunt and uncle: "Sometimes I watch television in Spanish with my aunt and uncle. My cousins like to watch television more in English. I lie down and watch television in English, too" (RQ, I2, 9).

Students' Use of English for Correspondence and Phone Calls

Mail and phone messages necessitated interviewees' use of English. Adriana stated: "The papers that come, bills, for example, I sometimes translate what they say for them [parents]" (AE, I1, 3).

Interviewees explained that they also helped their families with English phone calls when there was no-one else to help. Antonio explained: "Well, I have to do it" (AN, I1, 7).

Two students reported that they helped their parents with correspondence in Spanish.

Summary of students' use of English at home.

Co-researchers reported little use of English in their homes. They explained that Spanish was used almost exclusively with older family members and provided the main means of communication with siblings and cousins. Television was the English-language experience that was most commonly shared by members of their Spanish-speaking families at home. Use of English was also dictated by immediate needs such as answering the phone and reading correspondence and advertising.

Students' Use of English At School

D. STUDENTS' USE OF ENGLISH AT SCHOOL

1. Students' use of English with students from Spanish-speaking countries
    a. Students' use of English for academic purposes
        i. Most often use Spanish
        ii. Rarely use English
            -Except in highly structured activities
            -Except for common expressions
            -Except in classes with many native speakers of English
    b. Students' use of English for social purposes
        i. Most often use Spanish
        ii. Sometimes mix Spanish and English
        iii. A few individuals try to communicate in English
    c. Students' problem communicating in English: Often teased
2. Students' use of English with Mexican Americans
    a. Students' use of English for academic and social purposes
        i. Most often speak Spanish
        ii. Speak English with non-Spanish speakers
        iii. Relations often unfriendly
3. Students' use of English with students from non-Spanish-speaking countries
    a. Students' use of English for academic purposes: Limited communication in English
    b. Students' use of English for social purposes
        i. Limited to extensive communication in English
        ii. Limited communication in Spanish
    c. Benefits and problems communicating with non-native English speakers
4. Students' use of English with monolingual American students
    a. No opportunity for contacts in ESL/sheltered content classes
    b. Limited contacts in regular classes
        i. Because of traditional teaching methodologies
        ii. Because of students' ethnic grouping patterns
    c. Limited contacts through individual initiative or school activities
    d. Successful contacts through football and soccer programs
    e. Benefits and problems communicating with monolingual Americans
5. Students' use of English with teachers
    a. Students' use of English for academic purposes
        i. Most often use English with monolingual teachers
        ii. Sometimes use interpreters with monolingual teachers
        iii. Consistently use Spanish with some bilingual teachers
    b. Students' use of English for social purposes
        i. Limited contacts in English with some monolingual teachers
        ii. Limited contacts in Spanish with some bilingual teachers
6. Students' use of English with aides: Most often use Spanish with bilingual aides
7. Students' use of English with counselors
    a. Most often use Spanish with bilingual counselors
    b. Often fear miscommunication with monolingual counselors

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Co-researchers discussed their use of English at school, in and out of the classroom, with other students, including Spanish-speaking immigrants, Mexican Americans, non-Spanish-speaking immigrants, monolingual Americans. as well as with teachers, aides, and counselors.

Interviewees' Use of English with Students from Spanish-Speaking Countries

When talking to immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries, interviewees stated that they most often chose Spanish for academic and social purposes both inside and outside of the classroom. The use of English for academic purposes with students in the classroom was dependent on how activities were structured, the number of Spanish speakers in the class, and on individual differences in language learning strategies.

Interviewees' Use of English for Academic Purposes with Students from Spanish-Speaking Countries

As previously discussed, students functioned as their classmates' interpreters for content and procedures that teachers explained in English. Interviewees explained that they also discussed academic content in Spanish in large and small groups whenever possible. "Among ourselves [we speak] Spanish ..." (GD, I3, 2).

Co-researchers discussed both positive and negative aspects of students relying on each other in Spanish. On the negative side, Gabriel believed that many of his classmates made no attempt to understand or speak English: "They don't try to learn. They just wait for somebody to tell them what it means" (GD, I1, 12). Many of his classmates, however, argued that they were trying but were becoming discouraged by their perceived lack of progress.

On the positive side, all but one of the interviewees discussed how much more competent they felt speaking Spanish rather than English for academic purposes. Raúl, for example, talked about being able to discuss subject matter in depth in Spanish with his biology partner: "If I don't understand something, if there are some words or questions in English...that I don't understand...we reach conclusions and get answers between us [in Spanish]" (RQ, I1, 12). On the other hand, Antonio, Raúl's biology partner, explained, that he thought he would be able to express himself more in English if he felt a need. Antonio explained his problem in learning English: "In most of the classes, I always have friends who speak Spanish. Well, it's the problem that I have" (AN, I1, 2).

During more than one hundred and seventy-five classroom observations at Capital High, I noted very few examples of Spanish-speaking immigrants using English with each other except in advanced classes where the majority of students were native speakers of English. The few instances of English communication between Mexican-immigrant students in basic level classes were either part of highly structured activities and/or were limited to expressions and formulas. Examples of such expressions included: "Good job," "Thank you," "Shut up," and "What page?"

One of the physical education teachers at Capital High described this humorous incident in one of her classes where a recent immigrant quickly learned an appropriate expression:

> I've got a great story about a new Mexican student. We were working on the balance beam. The first time the kids got on it, they're really scared. They say, "Oh, my God." The new girl watched the other students get on the beam. When she got on she said, "Oh, my God." The students congratulated her on speaking English so well. (11-2-90, 4)

Simple small group activities provided the structure and support for students to engage in basic but functional English communication. In an ESL 1 class I observed Mexican partners telling phone numbers to each other in English while looking them up in a phone book (10-26-90, 1). In a Math A class, students were put into groups to analyze odds by tossing coins. Three Mexican girls, including Bárbara, called out the results of their tosses, indicating heads or tails in English by saying: "HHT, TTH," which a group member recorded. They then proceeded to do all of their calculations in Spanish. In a Life Skills class, students worked in groups of four identifying grocery items in English and placing them in their appropriate sections in a store (10-26-90, 4).

When group tasks became more complex, students did not use English except to say isolated words or give direct translations of work done in Spanish. In an ESL 2 class, for example, the teacher asked students to work in small groups to write down everything they could remember about a character they had seen in a video the previous day. Students discussed the character in Spanish, made a list in Spanish, and then translated the list into English (11-14-90, 6). Even one-sided attempts at communication in English by individual group members did not encourage others to try to communicate their ideas in English. In a different ESL 2 class, students working in small groups did a values clarification exercise completely in Spanish. Raúl, asked three questions in English which his group members chose to answer in Spanish (11-8-90, 9).

Interviewees' Use of English for Social Purposes with Spanish-Speaking Students

Interviewees said that they only spoke Spanish with Spanish-speaking students for social purposes. The only instances they described of using English for social purposes involved code-switching, that is to say, shifting between Spanish and English. Co-researchers reported that Spanish-speaking immigrants were often teased by their peers when they attempted to speak English.

Informants in ESL 1 classes described three Spanish-speaking immigrants, two from Mexico and one from Central America, who tried to use English with their friends for social purposes in and out of class. Yolanda described their code-switching in this way: "Sometimes he speaks to us half in English, half in Spanish" (YA, I4, 2).

Genoveva indicated that some of her friends resented English usage by recent immigrants as a kind of "showing off," but that she appreciated the opportunity to hear more English:

> She sometimes tries to talk to us in English. Not many of us understand her...I think it's good that she speaks English because I'm finally learning more. (GM, I2, 1-2)

During lunch with Genoveva I saw some of her friends tease Eva for speaking English. They did this by asking her if she still knew how to speak Spanish. This same lunch group had a similar reaction to Victoria, another Mexican girl who liked to speak English. After she left the group, they made the following tongue-in-cheek comments: "She must have been here for awhile. She forgot how to speak Spanish" (10-30-90, 11b).

Claudio also assured me that students would laugh at each other and say, "Why aren't you talking to me in Spanish?" (CE, I1, 11). He added, "Oh, sometimes Mexicans will say a few words to each other in English, but it is more natural, you feel better speaking Spanish because you know that they understand you better..." (CE, I1, 11).

Students at more advanced levels of English stated that they began to enjoy code-switching with other immigrants and Mexican Americans. Raúl explained:

> Well, in art class we don't have a lot of communication...but I have friends in there who speak Spanish and I sit next to one of them. He was speaking English with a Mexican who usually speaks Spanish and sometimes he spoke English and Spanish mixed together. "Sabes something," he told me--mixed together. It's fun, and he was speaking to a Mexican friend like that. (RQ, I1, 6)

Interviewees' Problems Communicating in English with Spanish-Speaking Students

Co-researchers confirmed my observations of their very limited use of English with their Spanish-speaking classmates and explained that it was more comfortable and efficient to speak Spanish than English. Samuel stated the first reason in this way: "I'm more embarrassed speaking English with people I know...like my friends" (10-18-90, 10). A lunchtime conversation provided this typical explanation of the second reason: "We can really talk in Spanish, but not in English" (10-16-90, 29).

Students reported no communication in English for academic purposes with other Spanish speakers until they were placed in classes with more native speakers of English. Cecilia explained:

> In ESL and in regular English they used to speak Spanish. Since my friends were there I used to speak Spanish. And with other kinds of Hispanics we spoke only Spanish. So I said to myself, "I'm in regular English, but I'm going to continue speaking Spanish. (CM, I1, 10)

After changing to a college preparatory English class on her teacher's recommendation, she noted that she consistently communicated in English with the only other recent Spanish-speaking immigrant in the class:

> There is only one other [Spanish speaker in the class]. There are others [Latinos], but they don't speak Spanish [in class]...I don't hear a word of Spanish...There is a boy from ESL like me. We don't speak Spanish at all. We don't use one word of Spanish...Sometimes he asks me, "Cecilia, do you have this?"...He says it to me in English. (CM, I1, 12)

Although a large number of native-English speakers was described by some as an important factor in determining language choice, others explained that sheer numbers of monolingual Americans did not automatically assure the use of English among Spanish-speakers. Adriana described this situation in her basic track English class where the teacher did not facilitate linguistic interaction in any way. She explained the use of Spanish as a powerful boundary-marking mechanism.

> Adriana: I think about one-third of us [speak Spanish]...We help each other in Spanish...The Americans keep to themselves. People of the same race help each other.
> Researcher: Aren't there any opportunities to talk to Americans?
> Adriana: Yes, yes, there are, but what happens is that you feel safer or better speaking to those who speak the same language as you do. You understand each other better. (AE, I1, 12)

Summary of interviewees' use of English at school with students from Spanish-speaking countries.

Interviews and observations provided evidence that use of English for academic and social purposes was rare among Spanish-speaking immigrants. In beginning and intermediate ESL classes, English was only used for academic purposes among Spanish-speakers when activities were highly structured and when teachers insisted that English be used. Formulaic expressions or very short responses were most commonly used by students in these cases.

Advanced students reported speaking English with fellow Spanish-speaking students only in classes where most of the students spoke English. Critical mass of English-speakers was not the only factor, however, because in some cases students reported that they felt uncomfortable with English speakers and therefore continued to communicate only in Spanish with their friends. Interviewees said they were more likely to speak English if teachers facilitated and expected communication in English while maintaining a respect for Spanish.

Co-researchers reported that Spanish was used almost exclusively among immigrants from Spanish-speaking countries outside of the classroom. They said that English use for social purposes often involved code-switching. Language choice varied with individuals and speaking English among Spanish-speaking peers was reported as a high-risk behavior which often resulted in teasing.

Interviewees' Use of English with Mexican-American Students

According to school records, more than three-fourths of Capital High's Hispanic students were born in the United States. Many of the remaining one-fourth came to the United States as young children and were educated in American elementary schools. They were primarily English-dominant, but many of them could understand some Spanish.

All co-researchers reported that, with certain exceptions, they avoided contact with Mexican Americans on campus, both in and out of the classroom, based on their previous unpleasant experiences. They stated that their infrequent communications with bilingual Mexican-Americans took place in Spanish for either academic or social purposes.

> Margarita gave this typical example of treatment that many interviewees described: Last year in my math class, there were three boys named Juan, Roberto, and Miguel. We were the only ones who didn't speak English in that math class...A Chicana told us, You Mexicans are wetbacks. It's better for you to go back to your country." They say lots of things to us, right? Finally, I asked her why she said that to us. I asked her in Spanish why she was saying that to us because she was Mexican, too. It didn't change anything that she had been born there and we were

> born in Mexico. Her parents, her grandparents were Mexican. She is, after all, still Mexican. After that, she didn't bother us anymore...Just because they speak English they tell us that they're American. They're really Mexicans. (MD, I2, 12)

Gabriel was typical of the many interviewees who talked about birth in the U.S. as a status symbol among Mexican Americans:

> In that class [physical education], we have a group of Mexican Americans...,but there are some...who weren't born here. They came when they were little, but they pretend they were born here...and that's why they put us down. They don't help us. They show it in class by saying things to us, sometimes insults...There is no communication. Sometimes American people who don't speak Spanish are better. They are friendlier than our own people who speak our own language. (GD, I3, 12)

Gabriel was also one of those who said that female Mexican Americans were more supportive of immigrants than males:

> I don't know. I say that we speak the same language. It's that--they don't help you. They wait. They don't say, "I'll help you." They put us down. The majority of them are like that. One or the other of them is friendly and helps you. The women are those who are a little more--Some of them are good. They're friendly. But the men--The men are only friendly with you if you adopt their lifestyle. If you--since they have gangs--if you talk to them in that way and take p art in their customs, you are a friend. But if they see you are different, they think they are better. (GD, I3, 14)

Gabriel's statement emphasized the fact that gang membership was a choice that both male and female immigrants faced soon after their arrival at Capital High. Only one of the co-researchers talked about being attracted to the *cholo* or gang lifestyle. All of the others reported negative reactions to gangs. Raúl's statement was typical:

> I consider myself to be--I act like a student...There are distinct groups. These groups can be very disciplined because if you want to be in those groups the leaders of those groups make you responsible to them. If you want to be in those groups, you have to do this, you have to act this way, you have to dress this way, you have to smoke or something...They make you conform like that if you want to be in that group. Well, I think that I'm not in any group. I have a friend who dresses like a *cholo*, but who doesn't act like a *cholo*. (RQ, I2, 5)

Ramón, who has lived in the U.S. for six years stated that he spoke English with Chicanos, but that he rarely associated with them or with gangs. He explained, "I try to separate myself from groups, from gangs, and all that" (RF, I2, 7).

Co-researchers talked about four different Mexican Americans with whom they had worked for academic purposes. Three out of four of these relationships involved regular linguistic interactions that were conducted in Spanish. Bárbara gave this explanation of why she and her friend spoke Spanish:

> [In life science] there are about three other students who speak Spanish and English...There is a girl next to me...andsometimes, sometimes she helps me with what I don't understand. We speak Spanish...She says that she feels badly speaking English with me. [laughter] I tell her...it will help me. She speaks English with me for a little while and soon after talks to me in Spanish. [laughter] (BT, I1, 6)

Antonio talked about pressuring a Mexican-American girl to speak Spanish in an algebra class. He explained that he could not understand why she did not want to speak Spanish: "Some can't speak it as well as we do, and they're embarrassed. There are some who just don't like to. They're embarrassed. I don't know" (AN, I1, 9).

During one of my visits to Antonio's algebra class, I watched his Mexican-American friend speak to him in Spanish and then switch to English to defend his work to the teacher:

> [Consuelo and Antonio spent about a minute discussing in Spanish one of his responses to a quiz that the teacher had just passed back to the students.]
> Consuelo: [to the teacher in English] "Shouldn't his answer be right?"
> Teacher: "That's a crazy way of doing it, but it's right."
> [The teacher changed the grade on Antonio's paper to 100%.]
> Teacher: [to Consuelo] "Can you explain #4?"
> [Consuelo answered easily and well in English.]
> Antonio: [to Consuelo in Spanish] "Good job."
> [Later, while all of the students were doing assigned problems.]
> Antonio: [to Consuelo in Spanish] "What did you get?"
> [Antonio and Consuelo compared their work in Spanish.] (11-30-90, 6)

In this instance, Antonio worked cooperatively with Consuelo in Spanish, but he also relied on her to act as intermediary with the teacher, a function which he later explained he would have been able to perform by himself in English with no assistance.

Antonio, Margarita, and Ramón were the only three interviewees who described talking to Mexican Americans in English for both academic and social purposes. Ramón explained that he did so on a regular basis in all of his classes. Margarita said that she had only recently started talking to a non-Spanish-speaking Mexican American in her economics class:

> We just started talking to her about two weeks ago. Before that she didn't speak to us. One time, Elvira and I were chatting because the lesson was over. It was 2:15, and we didn't have anything to do. I said to Elvira, "*Elvira, quiero ir a México.*" and Mr. Lopez heard me, and he said, "Speak English." And well, I was talking to Elvira in English. I told her that I wanted to go to Mexico. "Really," she said, "That's good." And then Flora got into our conversation. And she asked me where I was from and where Elvira was from. We speak English with her. And she was telling us that we were pretty, and Mr. Lopez was laughing at what we were saying to her because Flora wanted to say the names of the cities [where we were from], but she couldn't. She had a hard time saying Guanajuato...and Mr. Lopez was laughing because she couldn't say it. (MD, I2, 11)

During a classroom observation, I noted that Flora asked to "see" Margarita's homework and borrow her eraser. I later asked Margarita if she thought Flora was different from other Mexican Americans. Margarita answered:

> There are some Chicanos I haven't talked to, but I think that if we talked to them they would talk to us. But I don't talk to them, well, I wouldn't know what to talk to them about. [I would rather talk to Indonesian or Japanese students] because many of them [Chicanos] don't like us, and they say bad things to us.
> [MD, I2, 11]

Raúl, an outgoing young man, was able to cross group boundaries easier than other co-researchers. He stated that he does speak English with some Mexican Americans and Americans for social reasons, especially females:

> [In PE class] I speak a lot of English, too, because I have friends who, since they have been living here for a long time, it's easy for them to speak English. So they speak English, and I answer in English. We also speak with Americans, especially with the women [laughter]. (RQ, I1, 10)

Summary of interviewees' use of English with Mexican-American students.

All co-researchers described a mistrust of Mexican Americans based on personal experiences of having been called "wetbacks" or worse. They explained that this mistrust kept them from asking for help from bilingual Mexican-American students who could have helped them bridge linguistic, cultural, and academic gaps. They reported individual cases of friendship and assistance, mostly involving Mexican-American girls.

Infrequent interchanges between immigrants and Mexican Americans were more likely to take place in Spanish for both academic and social purposes, except when the Mexican Americans spoke only English.

Interviewees' use of English with Students from Non-Spanish-Speaking Countries

Thirteen percent of the students labelled LEP at Capital High did not speak Spanish as a first language. Co-researchers came into daily contact with students from Afghanistan, Indonesia, Tonga, the Philippines, Vietnam, India, and Japan. Even though there were never more than a few of these students in each of their ESL or sheltered content classes, interviewees described interactions with them as some of their only successful attempts at using English for social purposes. They also reported limited examples of using English for academic purposes with their non-Spanish-speaking classmates.

Interviewees' Use of English with Students from Non-Spanish-Speaking Countries for Academic Purposes

Interviewees in ESL 1 felt they could not ask complicated academic questions to their classmates from non-Spanish-speaking countries because, as explained by Genoveva, "I wouldn't know how to ask them" (GM, I1, 12). This did not keep them from negotiating meaning about classwork with a minimum of language as demonstrated in this sheltered math class:

> [The teacher was writing the answers to warm-up problems on the blackboard. Students sat at their seats checking their own work. Claudio shook his head as if he did not agree with one of the answers that the teacher had written. He turned and talked to Hiep, a Vietnamese girl sitting behind him while pointing to a problem on the paper he held in his hand.]
> Claudio: [to Hiep] "It's eight."
> Hiep: [shook her head no]
> [Samuel held out his hand for Hiep's paper. She gave it to
> him. He handed her paper back, smiled, and nodded. She
> smiled and nodded. Samuel and Hiep did not say one word to each other.]
> (10-24-90, 1)

Advanced students like Adriana could verbalize the same type of question. For example, she asked her Indonesian friend if she had found the definition of a vocabulary word assigned in a history class: "Did you get this word?" (12-12-90, 7). Both Margarita and Adriana reported that they discussed assignments in their U.S. history class with their mutual Indonesian and Japanese friends.

The following interaction in an ESL 1 class was one of the three instances I observed of students working in formally organized mixed-language groups for an academic purpose. The activity continued over a ten-minute period. This excerpt is typical of their language usage which I recorded while standing next to their group:

> Teacher: "Find a partner and look for these places and write phone numbers for each."
> [Students chose their group members. Only one group contained non-Spanish-speakers. It consisted of one Filipino, two Vietnamese, and one Mexican]
> Mexican: [to Filipino] "Did you find it?"
> Filipino: "Yeah, page 72."
> Mexican: "Write it."
> Filipino: "Okay."
> Vietnamese: "Look at this." (10-26-90, 1)

Interviewees' Use of English with Students from Non-Spanish-Speaking Countries for Social Purposes

Co-researchers volunteered many instances of communicating with their non-Spanish-speaking LEP classmates for social purposes. Samuel provided this description:

> I offered her a cookie, like this [holding his hand out], and she didn't want it. And I told her--well, she told me her name was Hiep--and I call her Hiep and she understands. And later I said to her, "Hiep, for you the cookie. For you the cookie," I said. "No, thank you, thank you," she kept saying. "No, no, no, for you the cookie, please." And finally she took it. (SD, I2, 9)

Even students who said they were normally hesitant about using English could cite examples of communicating informally with non-Spanish-speaking immigrants. Genoveva said she could tell Vietnamese students what time it was (GM, I1, 7). Yolanda described this exchange with an Indonesian student: "One time I wanted to ask an Indonesian student for something, and I don't know how the word came out, but it was right and he understood me" (YA, I2, 6). Yolanda also talked about her interactions with a Tongan girl: "Well, we chat. I showed her some pictures, and she asked who the people were" (YA, I3, 8).

Raúl, a less reticent student, talked about looking for opportunities to use English for social purposes:

> One student is from Korea, I think...He also sits next to me, behind me--and I chat with him in English. I often ask him for a piece of gum. I ask him for a piece of gum or something like that, and he tells me that he doesn't have any. "Why don't you have any?" I ask him. "You should bring some with you." It's one way to start a conversation. (RQ, I1, 15)

The number of Spanish speakers combined with peer pressure to make Spanish a communication option for all immigrants at Capital High School. Interviewees talked about non-Spanish-speaking immigrants learning to speak Spanish. Yolanda mentioned that her Tongan classmate "knows how to say lots of bad words in Spanish, but she doesn't know what they mean in English or in her language" (YA, I3, 9). The following are examples that I observed during my classroom visits: A Vietnamese boy asked the class to be quiet by saying: "¡*Cállense*!" (10-30-90, 5); A Tongan girl warned a classmate not to look at her paper: "¡*No copiar*!" (11-6-90, 7). Spanish-speaking students pressured a Vietnamese boy to respond to a teacher's question in Spanish in an ESL 1 class (3-20-90, 1).

The critical mass of Spanish speakers was sometimes moderated by personal relationships in determining language choice. The following is an example of a small group of Spanish speakers accommodating to the linguistic needs of their Indonesian friend. On this occasion four of us sat under a small palm tree in a grassy area adjacent to school buildings.

> I ate from a brown bag; Adriana, Margarita, and Rachel, their Indonesian friend, ate food they had bought at the cafeteria. My cookies and their nachos were passed around as the three of them spoke in English about a history assignment. The conversation then turned to a biology test that Margarita and Adriana had both taken and that Rachel was going to take the next period. Rachel listened and probed as her friends explained what to study. "Make sure to know the animal kingdoms," Margarita counseled. Adriana announced she also had a test that afternoon in her English class. She took out her notes and started speaking Spanish to me and Margarita. Pointing to vocabulary words she had written five times each, she said, "*Las escribo hasta que me peguen.*" [I write them until they stick.] The three of us continued talking about Adriana's English class and Margarita's ESL class. Our conversation in Spanish lasted for at least ten minutes. Rachel sat quietly and then started looking at her biology notes. She interrupted our conversation to ask, "Do I need to study this?" Margarita and Adriana answered Rachel's question in English. All three girls continued to speak English until the bell rang signaling the end of lunch. (11-2-90, 10)

In this example, the group started speaking English, mainly for academic purposes, and then later came back to English because of Rachel. Margarita and Adriana and I normally spoke Spanish together. When Rachel said something in English, they seemed to be reminded of the fact that she was there, and they began to speak English so she could participate. Rachel was a friend, and they wanted to communicate with her. Rachel told me that she did not mind it when her friends spoke Spanish. She said that she understood much of what they said in Spanish even though she always responded in English.

During an interview, Adriana talked about being very comfortable speaking English with immigrants from non-Spanish-speaking countries. She described language as a secondary issue saying that she chose her friends because of who they were rather what language they spoke. Her language diary reflected these same values since all of her recorded English conversations were outside of class with immigrant friends from Indonesia, Japan, Tonga, or Vietnam. Adriana explained:

> Adriana: Most of my friends were born in other countries, like Rachel. Last year I used to go around with Hanh, too. It was only during my first year that I used to go around with those who speak my language. After that, I went around with Hanh and now with Rachel and Margarita. And now I speak a lot of English with them .
>
> Researcher: Did you choose or do you choose friends that you have to speak English with?
>
> Adriana: No, not especially. I don't know. I get along with people who aren't from my country. Very few of them are from my country because the friends that I've had think bigger than I do. They think

> better. I don't get along with friends my age. We don't understand each other.
> Researcher: Mmm hmm.
> Adriana: So that I think that Hanh and Rachel, for example, also have more serious ideas than other girls my age. That's why I go around with them--not to speak English. (AE, I1, 9-10)

Benefits and Problems Communicating with Non-Native English Speakers

All of the interviewees but Genoveva, who liked the safety of speaking a few words of English with her Mexican friends, told me that it was easier to speak English with those who did not speak Spanish. Three of them said they preferred speaking English with monolingual Americans but enjoyed communicating with immigrants from non-Spanish-speaking countries. Gabriel explained: "Sometimes we try to talk. We try to understand each other and with the little that we know, we try to understand something" (GD, I1, 12). Since many of the co-researchers had very few opportunities to communicate with monolingual Americans their only frame of reference for speaking English with students on campus was speaking to those from non-Spanish-speaking countries. Yolanda explained: "If I talk to those who speak Spanish and English, well, I mix Spanish and English. I think it's better to speak English with someone who speaks English and another language" (YA, I2, 3-4).

Co-researchers also shared some of their cultural problems in communicating with non-Spanish speakers. Yolanda described some of her difficulties with a Tongan girl whom she had spent time getting to know: "I don't like her ways...Well, she is too forward with people, with men. She hits them all [motioning with a punching movement]" (YA, I3, 8).

Antonio talked about his problems with a boy from Afghanistan:

> The one from Afghanistan, well, he doesn't speak Spanish, and I have to talk to him in English...He is very crude. He uses a lot of foul language. He treats people badly, too...He says a lot of bad words to us in English. I don't like foul language like that in English. When I say them, I say them in Spanish [laughter]. I don't say them in English. (AN, I1, 4)

Summary of interviewees' use of English with students from non-Spanish-speaking countries.

Although most ESL and sheltered content classes had only a few LEP students who did not speak Spanish, half of the co-researchers talked about their contacts with these students as their most successful experiences in English. Their English communications both in and out of the classroom were more often for social than academic purposes, possibly because they could function more easily on that level and possibly because classroom activities were not structured to facilitate student interaction for academic purposes. Interviewees said it was easier to speak English with people who did not know how to speak Spanish. Some problems communicating with non-Spanish-speaking students for social purposes were based on cultural rather than on linguistic factors.

Interviewees' Use of English with Monolingual American Students

LEP students were in few classes with monolingual Americans during their first two years at Capital High because their schedules consisted primarily of ESL and sheltered content classes which were not intended for native speakers of English. Co-researchers reported very limited or no contact with native speakers of English in their PE or elective classes which they also attended during that period of time. Although ESL 3 students were in more classes with monolingual Americans, they reported limited interactions with them. Three out of four "post-ESL" students, however, described talking to monolingual Americans for both academic and social purposes in class. Only three interviewees reported speaking English with monolingual Americans outside of class. These contacts took place in sports programs, clubs, or the Regional Occupational Program. All co-researchers stated that they wanted to have more opportunities to communicate with monolingual Americans both in and out of class.

No Opportunities for Contacts with Monolingual Americans in ESL and Sheltered Content Classes

All interviewees explained that their class schedules, consisting primarily of English as a Second Language and sheltered content classes, segregated them from monolingual Americans during their first two years of classes at Capital High.

Limited Contacts with Monolingual Americans in "Regular" Classes

"Regular" classes, those that were not ESL or sheltered content classes, were the scenes of a limited number of interactions between ESL and monolingual American students. "Post-ESL" students were the only interviewees to report in-class contacts with native English speakers for both academic and social purposes.

Physical education (PE) classes were mentioned by ESL 1 and ESL 2 students as the place where they were most likely to interact with monolingual Americans. As explained when discussing language learning strategies, it was in a PE class where Yolanda had to use English to decide on soccer plays; it was in an athletics class (football) where Claudio listened attentively to coaches and players alike. Genoveva portrayed Americans as open and friendly, based on her experiences in PE class:

> Sometimes they come over to us. Well, they speak to us in English, but we tell them that we don't understand them. We just look for a girl who knows how to speak Spanish who can ask them. And then we tell her so she can tell them. That's how it goes. And later they start to talk to us, but we don't know what they are saying. They are very friendly. (GM, I1, 17)

Ethnic grouping patterns kept interviewees from communicating with monolingual Americans in some PE classes. Gabriel (ESL 2) described this situation in his PE class, his only one with monolingual Americans: "It's like with groups. We don't speak English. We stick together. And those who speak English, the Americans, they get together with their own...Some of them are friendly" (GD, I3, 12).

When several PE teachers combined their classes for certain activities, interviewees described a greater likelihood of Spanish-speaking students not speaking English with monolingual Americans: "[In PE] I only talk to two or three of them [monolingual Americans]. The rest of them [I talk to] are Mexicans...Since four classes get together, all of the Mexican girls get together" (YA, I3, 14).

Raúl, stated that the same situation was true for boys:

> [In PE] I don't try to speak English. There are three or four classes with the same teacher, and people who speak Spanish stick together. Because in my class--I'm with Smith--with hat teacher I don't think there are many of us who speak Spanish. But that class joins with others and there are lots of people who speak Spanish. We speak Spanish almost all of the time. (RQ, I1, 9)

Even though co-researchers in ESL 3 were in academic classes with monolingual American students, they reported very limited linguistic interactions with them. The following interchanges were the only two I observed during six days of observations with three different students at this level. In the first case, Bárbara asked an American student for a piece of paper in her government class. In the second, Antonio reviewed for a test with Americans sitting at a table behind him in physical science. After class Antonio explained to me that he had spoken more English than usual since his Spanish-speaking tablemate was absent that day. He said that he had shown that he could speak English when it was necessary.

In contrast, three out of four "post-ESL" interviewees reported that they occasionally spoke to monolingual Americans in class for both academic and social purposes. My classroom visits enabled me to observe the types of interactions that co-researchers had described. Cecilia, for example, stated that she had American friends in both English and typing classes with whom she communicated. This is what she said about Lerae:

> She is the one who asks me or sometimes I ask her--like classmates...She is very nice. The truth is that there arepeople who--I don't know--I like to talk to them. They understand me well. I have also started to want to talk to them. She is very nice. (CM, I2, 3)

The days I visited Cecilia's classes she spoke to Lerae at least three times. Although I was not sitting close enough to their typing tables to hear what they were saying, Cecilia told me during the follow-up interview that they were discussing assignments.

Marco described similar experiences with monolingual Americans:

> My classmates from here who speak English--those who don't know any Spanish--Those are the ones I like to talk to...They're *gabachos*, blacks. They're the only ones I like to talk to--in science, art, PE, and English...about the class, homework, what we did. (MN I1, 1)

During the days that I shadowed him, I saw Marco interact with his American tablemate in Earth Science class. The teacher lectured both days, and they compared notes at least four times each day.

Roberto, who had been in the U.S. for six years, reported that he was very comfortable using English with monolingual Americans for both academic and social purposes in all of his classes. I saw him interact with monolingual American students in all of his upper level classes for two days. In fact, the only times I heard him speak Spanish during classes were at the request of an exchange student from Spain who had very limited proficiency in English.

Adriana was the only "post-ESL" student who said that she spoke to Americans in her classes only when it was necessary. She stated that she was very comfortable using English with non-Spanish-speaking immigrants, but she indicated that she felt unsure of herself with Americans:

> When I'm in front of an American I am afraid to speak English...With those from America, America--I don't know. I speak it, but I don't know--It's like it's gone. I forget English. (AE, I2, 8)

During my observations, I did not see her say anything to a monolingual American student except "thank you" to a girl who handed her a disk in her computer class.

Limited Contacts with Monolingual Americans Out of Class Through Individual Initiative or School Activities

All researchers reported limited and insufficient contacts with monolingual American students outside of class. Only three of them participated in extracurricular school activities which automatically involved some type of informal contact outside of class with monolingual American students. Of the other eleven co-researchers only Samuel described conscious strategies for meeting American students. All other out-of-class contacts, either pleasant or unpleasant, were unplanned. Co-researchers reported that they had limited knowledge of school activities involving native English speakers.

As a previously discussed learning strategy, Samuel left his Spanish-speaking friends to spend time with English-speakers:

> Sometimes I try to not stay with my friends...Sometimes when I eat or after I finish eating, I take off on my own. I sit with gabachos. I sit there just listening. Or I go with some of them who I already know but who speak only English...I do that...[I catch] only little words, short ones, trying to understand (SD, I2, 8)

Claudio mentioned both positive and negative experiences with American students outside of class:

> There are people who start to say [bad] things to us when they see us. There are others who don't, who are good. I have friends who explain things to me in English. I ask them if I can help them with their schoolwork in Spanish. They ask There are others who see you and say "Go back" and other things. That's when you get mad and--That's why they say they don't like us. There's a little bit of everything. *Hay de todo.* (CE, I2, 12)

All of the interviewees explained that they really did not understand many of the social events at Capital High. None of them, for example, had voted for the homecoming court or knew anything about the homecoming dance. They used me as a resource person to find out what I knew about these activities at their high school.

Interviewees' comments about meeting Americans through school activities revolved around issues of access and language proficiency. Recent newcomers like Genoveva and Samuel were not sure of how to become involved in things on campus. Genoveva said: "I would like to participate in activities, but I don't know what they do. I don't know if I can get into the clubs" (GM, I2, 9). Samuel had put his name on lists for the track team but did not know what his next step should be (SD, I2, 9).

There were very strong feelings expressed by interviewees who said that access to classes and activities--from yearbook to dance to cheerleading--was limited by English ability and racial considerations. The following lunchtime conversation with Bárbara and her friends in the school cafeteria was typical of reactions I heard:

> Bárbara: There is discrimination against Mexican girls who want to be cheerleaders. I was in a dance class. I really tried, but the teacher didn't like me. It was my favorite class. I did everything I could, but she didn't want me in that class. I feel really bad. My parents didn't know if they should come to school to talk to somebody about the dance class. They don't speak English very well.
> Rosario: My uncle who can speak English came to school to talk to people, but it didn't do any good.
> Teresa: Yeah, a lot of Mexican girls want to be cheerleaders, but can't make it because they don't speak English well enough.
> Rosario: Yeah, I know someone that happened to.
> Susie: [who was born in the U.S.] They weren't happy when we had a Mexican homecoming queen last year.
> [All of the girls started talking at once.]
> Researcher: Did lots of students vote for homecoming queen?
> Susie: They voted, but the *gringos* weren't happy.
> Teresa: Yeah, I'd like to be on yearbook, but they won't let me because my English isn't good enough. We can't do anything at this school. (10-16-90, 29)

Adriana talked about wanting to be on the cheerleading squad next year at Capital High. She said she had originally thought that Latinas were not welcome since all of the cheerleaders but one were blonds. After learning the price of the uniforms and hearing her parents' objections she explained that the cheerleading situation was quite complicated for Latinas:

> At first I thought that they wouldn't let me in because I was a Latina, but now I see that it's very expensive--the outfits and everything. Also, rides at night are difficult to get. (AD, I2, 5)

She said that she gained her mother's approval against her father's objections:

> My father didn't like the idea very much because he said that we were going to go out with boys and when you go out with boys--Well, I don't know. Fathers think that way. Finally, my mother convinced him. She said it was my last year and that I had to participate at school. It's my mother who always supports me. Nothing

> from my father. My father, well, only thinks about what's happening to me with boys--if they're going to hurt me or something. That's why he's afraid. (AE, I2, 6)

She said that she planned to get a part-time job to pay for uniforms and other expenses involved in the extracurricular activity. At the time of the first interview she was uncertain if she had been accepted on the squad, since she had successfully gone through the initial screening process but not the more rigorous "try-outs." In contrast to other Latinas with whom I spoke, she thought that she would be judged mainly on her dance and gymnastic abilities, not English language proficiency, even though she had waited three years for her English to improve before applying to be a cheerleader:

> Since I was a little girl I always wanted to be a cheerleader. Well, in Mexico I couldn't. When I came and saw the girls twirling out there, I liked what I saw. I said to myself, I'll wait about two or three years so that I'll know more English, so that I'll know it better, and then I'll go into it. Well, the time has passed and I have gotten into it, and I hope I'll do well...I really don't think you have to know English. I think it's my work that's going to count. (AE, I2, 3)

She did not have the opportunity to see her work count, however, because she was not chosen as a member of the cheerleading squad. She explained that she had not understood an important deadline in the try-out process and was, therefore, ineligible.

Two interviewees, Cecilia and Marco, said they wanted to talk to more Americans but that they were not interested in school activities as a way of accomplishing that goal. Cecilia explained: "I'm interested [in school activities], but not much. But talking--I'd like that because I'd like to speak English like I speak Spanish, with people like I'm speaking to you" (CM, I2, 3).

Interviewees' Successful Contacts with Monolingual American Students Through Football and Soccer Programs

Two co-researchers played sports, Claudio on the football team, Ramón on the soccer team. Both said they had easy access to the teams; they had just signed up with their counselors and talked to their coaches. Both also reported positive social and linguistic experiences which were described as part of their language learning strategies. Ramón said this about his teammates: "These guys are my friends even though I only see them at school and during games. I have lots of fun with them" (1-10-91, 9). Ramón stated that his soccer team provided his only extended opportunity to use English for social purposes: "It's the only time that I speak English and chat. The rest of the time I study and do my homework. That's what helps me a lot" (RF, I1, 1).

Interviewees' Benefits and Problems Communicating with Monolingual American Students

Interviewees reported benefits from their linguistic interactions with Americans. Claudio's explanation was typical because he stated that monolingual Americans tried to understand him without making fun of his efforts:

> If I want to speak to an American, he knows from the start that I don't know English, but I think he tries to understand it and maybe he understands me. There aren't other problems. They don't make fun of you--some of them do, but the Chicanos make fun of you more. (CE, I1, 11)

Antonio said that he had very few opportunities to talk to Americans, but he felt a sense of achievement from his efforts: "After you have contact with an American and you speak, after you're finished you realize that you could really have a conversation with him. You feel like--I don't know--proud" (AN, I1, 6).

Comprehension problems interviewees associated with talking to monolingual Americans have already been discussed. In the case of students, rather than teachers, they primarily included insufficient language modification, especially in the native speaker's rate of speech.

Ramón was the only co-researcher who explained that he was experiencing bilingual, bicultural conflicts because of his use of English with monolingual friends outside of class. He described his situation in this way:

> I have a lot of American and Mexican friends. But since sometimes Mexicans can't speak English--Well, I'm talking to an American and another Mexican comes up,

> and I try not to stop the conversation with the American but rather to talk to both of them at the same time. It's very hard not to treat one of them badly. (RF, I2, 5)

After having been in the U.S. for six years Ramón said he sometimes found himself in situations where he had to choose between Spanish-speaking and English-speaking friends.

Summary of interviewees' use of English with monolingual American students.

Although co-researchers had no opportunities to communicate with monolingual Americans in their classes containing only LEP students, they reported few contacts with native speakers in classes that combined immigrants and Anglos.

Only three participated in sports or other extracurricular activities with Americans. One hoped to be on the cheerleading squad next year. Interviewees said that they wanted more opportunities to talk to monolingual American students, but they did not know about activities or events on campus that would provide them with such contacts. Two said that they wanted to talk to Americans but were not interested in school activities.

José's statement was straightforward: "The truth is that I don't have enough friendships with Americans" (JT, I2, 5).

Students' Use of English with Teachers

Since Capital High School does not offer primary language instruction in content areas, all of the interviewees' classes were conducted in English except a class entitled Spanish for Spanish Speakers. Interviewees discussed their experiences in asking and answering teachers' questions for academic and social purposes. Co-researchers reported their successes and problems in communicating with their monolingual teachers in English, as well as their ambivalence about speaking English with their bilingual teachers. Three students also commented on their teachers' use of interpreters.

Students' Use of English with Teachers for Academic Purposes

All interviewees acknowledged the need to speak English with monolingual teachers. Antonio's explanation was typical: "With the teachers, I have to speak English or they won't understand me" (AN, I1, 2).

Cecilia ("post-ESL") explained that talking to teachers was not an easy process:

> It's that I'm embarrassed because sometimes I talk, and when they don't understand me---I start to--My mouth starts to not be able to pronounce quickly. I can't. Sometimes they make me feel confident that I'm speaking well. I think that I can when they make me feel confident about speaking. (CM, I1, 8)

As previously stated, most classroom interactions in English took place between the teacher and students in large group settings. Co-researchers reported that they were often able to answer teachers' questions, but that they were sometimes frustrated by ideas that they did not know how to express in English. When asked during interviewees for specific examples, students could often cite a response or question from a recent class. Five students recorded classroom interactions with teachers in their language journals. I found that my classroom observations also provided a rich source of data for interactions between students and teachers. From all three sources, I chose typical student/teacher interchanges for academic or social purposes that demonstrated different levels of students' language proficiency.

Students in ESL 1 responded to or asked simple questions in English. Genoveva noted in her language diary that she could identify grocery items when the Life Skills teacher asked, "What is it? (LD, GM, 1). Samuel indicated in his language diary that he asked his PE teacher, "Swim now?" (LD, SD, 1).

ESL 2 students answered and asked questions that were more cognitively challenging and less contextually based. In a sheltered biology class Raúl answered as follows:

> Teacher: Today we're going to do a demonstration of natural selection [showing peppered moths on video]. Which ones will the birds eat?
> Raúl: Both.
> Teacher: [laughing] Okay. Which ones will they find?

Raúl: White ones. (12-10-90, 7)

In a guessing game in an ESL 2 class, Gabriel asked this question: "Is in Europe?" (11-2-90, 8).

For ESL 3 students, communication with teachers was sometimes more abstract and challenging. After a heartbeat recovery activity in Health Science class, Bárbara successfully maintained this interchange:

Teacher: What did you recover to?
Bárbara: 106.
Teacher: What--160?
Bárbara: No.
Teacher: [looking at her paper] 106. Very healthy recovery...You don't run much, do you?
Bárbara: [shakes head no]
Teacher: Do you smoke?
Bárbara: [giggles a little and shakes head no]
Teacher: You wouldn't tell me if you did. (11-28-90, 4)

Antonio (ESL 3) asked this question in sheltered biology class:

Teacher: No other animal uses real language.
Antonio: What about dogs?
(12-12-90, 4)

At the "post-ESL" level, the following questions and answers were representative. Ramón, in an honors government class, responded to this question:

Teacher: Can you give me an example of advertising?
Ramón: Yesterday you showed us a senator shaking a kid's hand who had dialed 911.
Teacher: Good. (1-9-91, 10)

Cecilia asked this question in a sheltered U.S. history class: "The North was against slavery, right? Why did they send the slaves back?" (12-10-90, 5).

As stated, these questions and answers were typical of those reported by co-researchers or recorded as linguistic interactions with their teachers. As in most classrooms it was much easier to find examples of answers than questions.

Questions were especially difficult for students at all levels to formulate in English. Students reported that they were accustomed to using other students as resources or, in some cases, to simply walking out of class with their questions unresolved:

> We are learning English. I like to know things in English, but I think that occasionally when you have doubts--questions--occasionally--if the teacher doesn't speak Spanish, there are times when we don't explain ourselves well and the teacher doesn't understand us, and the doubt remains. (GD, I4, 3)

Informants were ambivalent about whether to use English or Spanish in content classes taught in English by bilingual teachers. Seven out of eight students in sheltered U.S. history classes with a bilingual teacher said that they usually chose to communicate in Spanish rather than English for both academic and social purposes even though the instructor conducted the class in English.

Gabriel explained why he chose to use Spanish:

> If the teacher speaks Spanish and I don't know a lot of English, it's easier to ask things in Spanish. It's more logical. It's easier to ask him in Spanish if he knows it. It's the easiest way to understand each other. And he answers us in English. We don't have a lot of problems understanding him but we do in speaking it. For fear of saying it wrong or of not knowing how to say it in English, we ask him in Spanish. (GD, I4, 1)

Cecilia stated that she tried to use English when possible:

> I hardly ever speak English with the [history] teacher, but sometimes when he asks me something, not anything big, but I can answer in English. I say it to him in English...I don't say a lot, but I say a word or two...Sometimes I say it to him in Spanish, but sometimes I try--if he asks a question--to answer in English. (CM, I1, 9)

Antonio explained that he knew he could speak more English in that class but that peer pressure made it difficult for him to try:

> [In history] we speak only Spanish...That's the problem...We speak to him in Spanish, and he answers us in English...I don't really know why. It's that most of the people speak Spanish. If you are the only one speaking English, you feel uncomfortable. I don't know. It's very comfortable in there--all in Spanish. I would like to be that comfortable in English, but we can't do it. (AN, I1, 1)

Students expressed anger and resentment at not being allowed to ask their questions in Spanish in other classes with bilingual teachers. The following comment was made during a lunchtime conversation with Cecilia and her friends:

> What makes me mad is that even the Mexican teachers--and they belong to *la raza*--don't want us to speak Spanish in class. Sometimes we have questions and can't explain them in English. They should understand. (10-16-90, 29)

Margarita and her friend, Elvira, confirmed this opinion:

> Elvira: [to Researcher] I'm glad you're in class. The teacher is acting differently. He usually tells us, "Speak English, not Spanish."
> Margarita: He always says, "Shut up." (12-4-90, 9)

Even though all teachers presented lessons in English, interviewees explained that students were encouraged to use English or Spanish in the classroom through teachers' use of language and attitude toward language. Teacher-controlled language choice will be discussed in Chapter 7 as an educational factor that affects students' use of English and general learning.

As discussed by three co-researchers, some teachers chose to communicate with LEP students through interpreters. Genoveva, a very recent immigrant, talked about her art class where her infrequent interchanges with her art teacher were interpreted by a student aide. Cecilia had a wider perspective after having spent two and one-half years at Capital High:

> Cecilia: There are some teachers who, because you don't speak English, want someone to translate for you. They don't want to speak to you, but rather to the person who is translating for you.
> Researcher: Here in this school?
> Cecilia: Oh, yes, they talk to you. It's like they say, "Let's see, Cecilia, you don't know English. It's better to get a translator."...They really shouldn't do that. I think sometimes, yes, when you ask for it. When you don't ask for it, I think they shouldn't try to do it.
> Researcher: ...I haven't seen any teachers like that in this school who don't talk to students directly.
> Cecilia: No, there are some--not all of them. (CM, I1, 7)

Students Use of English with Teachers for Social Purposes

Co-researchers mentioned few instances of communication with their teachers for social purposes during class. During classroom visits, however, I noticed that some teachers directed personal questions to individuals or to the whole class. A math teacher asked a student who had her head on her desk: "How are you feeling today, Hiep?" (10-25-90, 2). A biology teacher joked with students while they were working on DNA models (11-30-90, 3). Teachers also used informal interchanges at the end of class. This interchange took place minutes before the bell rang in a mathematics class:

Teacher: Today there is a rally for Homecoming. The game is next Friday. Claudio plays.
[Claudio smiled broadly.]
Enrique: *También juego yo.* [I'm playing, too.]
Miguel: *Eres el aguador.* [You're the waterboy.]
Gabriel: [to the Researcher] *¿Cómo se dice: Ud. viene*? [How do you say: *¿Ud. viene* ?]
Researcher: Are you coming?
Gabriel: [to the Teacher] Are you coming?
Teacher: Sure. (10-25-90, 3)

Spanish-speaking students indicated that they had understood the teacher's statements by making comments in Spanish to which the teacher could not respond. Gabriel later explained that he had no difficulty asking or answering academic questions in this class, but said that he was unsure of how to ask a simple question for a social purpose.

A similar type of interchange was initiated by a teacher at the end of an ESL 2 class. In this case Spanish-speaking students responded to two of the teacher's four questions in English:

Teacher: What's happening tonight?
Students: Football game.
Teacher: With whom?
Esteban: Riverside.
Teacher: What else?
[No response]
Teacher: Homecoming queen. And tomorrow?
[No response]
Teacher: Dance. (11-7-90, 13)

After class, interviewees explained that they did not respond to the last two questions because they did not know about the school activities in question. They said that they were more interested in this discussion than in the lesson for the day. The teacher did not pursue the subject.

Four interviewees talked about their favorable reactions to informal discussions in their history class where they communicated in Spanish with their bilingual teacher. Margarita's statement was typical:

Sometimes we all start to talk to him about something, about something that's

> happening in Mexico, or about something he remembers, something that's happening in the world...But everybody in the class, not just with one person. (MD, I2, 4)

Except for the three students in sports or the Regional Occupations Program, interviewees reported very few contacts with teachers outside of class in English or Spanish. Margarita told me that she had spoken in Spanish to one of the bilingual teachers, asking her to explain the school's computer literacy test:

> When I had to take the computer literacy tests, I asked Mrs. Vasquez. She's the only one I asked. She said she was going to help me, and she tried to help me...It's easier to talk to her because she pays attention to what you're saying. Mr. Lopez is always in a hurry. I never talk to him. (MD, I2, 4)

Summary of students' use of English with teachers.

All of the interviewees' classes were conducted in English except courses in Spanish for Spanish speakers. Co-researchers stated that they felt better able to respond to their monolingual teachers' questions than to ask questions. Interviews, language logs, and class observations provided examples of both responses and questions that were indicative of students' proficiency levels in English. Teacher-directed, large-group discussions were the primary source for academic interchanges. Co-researchers expressed ambivalence about speaking English with their bilingual teachers for either academic or social purposes. They stated that they resented bilingual teachers who did not allow them to use Spanish for social purposes in the classroom. Students said they felt it was very important for teachers to respect their language. They reported very few contacts with teachers outside of class.

Students Use of English with Counselors

Two out of seven counselors at Capital High were bilingual. Of the eight co-researchers whose counselors spoke only English, two of them, both "post-ESL" students, stated that they had no communication problems. Three of them said that they had never talked to their counselors. Three of them, however, reported that English communication with their counselors was sometimes problematic. Bárbara, for example, reported difficulties with her class schedule. As a graduating senior she was not certain how many science courses she still had to take. She confided, "I really don't understand why first she told me one thing and later she told me something else. It's possible that she doesn't understand me very well" (BR, I2, 8). Margarita said that she had experienced similar difficulties: "My counselor doesn't speak Spanish, and it's difficult for us to have discussions...because it's hard for us to understand one another" (MD, I2, 8).

Summary of students' use of English with counselors.

Co-researchers experiences with counselors varied greatly. Language played a key role in misunderstandings for some students.

Discussion of Theme 2: What Students Say About Their Current Use of English

Although they disagree on the exact function of two-way interaction in the language acquisition process, theorists agree that students' use of language helps them acquire language. Swain (1985) argued in her Comprehensible Output Hypothesis that students' need the opportunity to use, not just understand language that is slightly beyond their current level of second language proficiency. Krashen (1985) agreed to a weak form of Swain's Comprehensible Output Hypothesis when he theorized that interaction is not necessary for acquisition but that it is helpful because it increases language input, the essential component in his Comprehensible Input Hypothesis. In either the weak or strong form of the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis, therefore, theorists see two-way linguistic interactions as helpful to students trying to acquire a second language.

Co-researchers reported that they had few opportunities to use English in their communities, homes, and workplaces. They explained that their need to use English in the community was limited by the large numbers of Spanish speakers in their area. Students said that English usage was vital only for some shopping and medical services and that they did not consciously seek places in the community to practice English. They expressed hesitancy about their ability to perform basic language functions in English in their community.

The large number of Spanish-speakers in the community also enabled some of the employed interviewees to continue using Spanish with their bosses, co-workers, and many customers. Some workplaces, however, offered opportunities and motivation for co-researchers to communicate with monolingual English-speaking customers. In these places of employment, all of the necessary components for language acquisition posited by Wong-Fillmore (1985a) were in place. Motivated students said that they regularly found themselves in situations with English-speakers where they understood messages and were able to respond. They described the pride and confidence they felt in communicating with customers.

At home, Spanish was used to communicate with elders, and it provided the main means of communication with siblings and cousins. Television was the English-language experience that was most commonly shared by members of their Spanish-speaking families in the home setting. Use of English was also dictated by immediate needs such as reading mail and ads and answering the phone. As described by students, language-usage and media-usage patterns shifted within families.

In his Threshold Hypothesis, Cummins (1979) theorized that it is vital for bilingual students to maintain their first languages through social and academic use in order to achieve the positive cognitive effects of proficient bilingualism. Bilingual theorists (Cummins, 1983, 1989; Hardy & Riley, 1986; and Lambert & Tucker, 1972) also indicated that for low-status minorities, proud use of their mother language is also a way of promoting self-esteem and counteracting negative perceptions of their language. Bilingual students should not have to make the choice between languages and cultures that Rodriguez (1982) painfully described.

The statements of co-researchers indicated, therefore, that the "language rich" environment outside of the classroom is less English-intensive for Mexican students who can function in their first language without the need to use English in most situations. Their experiences suggest that consistent input and use of Spanish in the community, if not supplemented by English input at school, might prolong the time needed by some Mexican immigrants to acquire conversational skills in English. The inability of interviewees who have been in the U.S. for two years or more to function in English for social purposes indicates that they have may have insufficient opportunities to develop their basic interpersonal communication skills.

Wong-Fillmore (1985b) stated that for many LEP students, school is the only place they come in contact with native speakers but that the classroom is an ideal place to acquire English if there are opportunities for linguistic input and interaction. Students described their difficulties understanding English and their very limited English interactions with any English-speaking students at school.

Interviews and observations indicated that Spanish-speaking immigrants did not communicate in English with each other for academic or social purposes inside the classroom unless very specific conditions were present. In beginning and intermediate classes, English was only used for academic purposes among Spanish-speakers when activities were highly structured and when teachers insisted that English be used. Formulaic expressions or very short responses were most commonly used by students in these cases. Students only reported speaking English with fellow Spanish-speaking students in classes where most of the students spoke English. The large number of English speakers was not the only factor determining language choice, however, because in some classes students reported that they felt isolated from English speakers and continued to speak Spanish with bilingual classmates. In these cases, interviewees described language as a powerful boundary-marking mechanism (Barth, 1969) that discouraged interaction between groups. Interviewees stated that English interaction among Spanish-speaking students only occurred when English communication was facilitated, encouraged, and expected by teachers. At all other times, even in ESL classes, they spoke Spanish.

The use of Spanish for academic purposes in American classrooms is part of an ongoing debate between bilingual and English-Only programs. As discussed in Lucas & Katz (1991), part of this debate is artificial since it is unrealistic to suppose that educational programs with more than one LEP student of the same language background will not involve some communication in students' first languages. Lucas & Katz found that this use of native languages can be productively channeled to promote academic growth, especially in content area classes, and still leave room for activities that promote English language proficiency.

Co-researchers reported peer pressure to use Spanish outside as well as inside the classroom. They indicated that their friends would think they were different if they tried to speak English with them. This peer group influence on language choice supports the findings of Labov (1972).

There were few examples that co-researchers reported or that I observed of recent Spanish-speaking immigrants using English among themselves for either academic or social purposes. Most instances involved some switching between Spanish and English. As researched by Zentella (1984), this code-switching is a common phenomenon in Latino communicative behavior that is incorporated into the non-standard English dialect known as Chicano English. It does not lead to problems acquiring standard English if there are sufficient opportunities and motivation to do so. Valdes (1988) suggested that among some bilinguals it indicates an advanced level of fluency in both languages.

All interviewees expressed strong reservations about communicating in either Spanish or English with most Mexican American students whom they said treated them as inferiors. This kept them from asking for help from students who could have helped them bridge linguistic, cultural, and academic gaps. They reported individual cases of friendship and assistance, but they explained that communication was more likely to take place in Spanish for both academic and social purposes, except when the Mexican Americans spoke only English.

There has been little research on inter-group relations between Spanish-speaking students as a factor in determining language choice. Matute-Bianchi (1986) described the perceptions of Mexican-oriented students, who said they were treated as inferiors by Mexican Americans. She did not specify, however, that recent Mexican immigrants reported this same type of treatment by Mexican American students.

Co-researchers talked about their contacts with non-Spanish-speaking LEP students, both in and out of the classroom, as among their most successful experiences in English. Their experiences suggest that these interchanges were more often for social than academic purposes because they could function more easily at the BICS level and because classroom activities were generally not structured to facilitate academic interaction.

Interviewees said it was easier to speak English with people who did not speak Spanish. They expressed pride in making themselves understood. As discussed by Ferguson (1975) who labelled it foreigner talk and by Selinker (1972) and Krashen (1981b, 1983, 1985) who called it interlanguage, communication between non-native-speakers is often less stressful since its main purpose is to relay a message rather than to be grammatically correct.

Interviewees cited examples of both responses and initiated dialogs which demonstrated what Krashen labelled language acquisition rather than learning. With non-Spanish-speaking classmates, they reported that English for social purposes just "came out" without conscious effort. Similarly, immigrants from non-Spanish-speaking countries often "picked up" Spanish expressions. Problems communicating with non-Spanish-speaking students were sometimes based on cultural differences rather than linguistic factors.

Co-researchers' communication with monolingual American students was limited by their class schedules. Three out of four "post-ESL" interviewees, however, reported occasional contacts with monolingual Americans in their "regular" classes for both social and academic purposes. This finding suggests that increased contacts between Mexican immigrants and American students facilitates linguistic interactions.

Only three of the interviewees participated in sports or other extracurricular activities, such as ROP, with Americans outside of class. One of them hoped to be on the cheerleading squad next year. Although interviewees wanted more opportunities to talk to and get to know monolingual American students, they did not know about activities or events on campus that would provide them with such contacts. Two of the co-researchers said that they wanted to talk to Americans but were not interested in school activities.

Vygotsky (1978) proposed that students learn when they interact with people in their environment. Second language theorists also maintain that interaction is an important component of second language acquisition. Co-researchers describe limited contacts in English in their communities, workplaces, and homes. Although school provided many of their only contacts with English-speakers, these interactions were insufficient to ensure continuous linguistic and academic progress.

Co-researchers described many educational and institutional factors which made the use and acquisition of English difficult or impossible. These will be presented and analyzed in the following chapter.

Chapter 7

REPORT OF THE FINDINGS: THEME 3

EDUCATIONAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS THAT AFFECT IMMIGRANT STUDENTS' USE AND ACQUISITION OF ENGLISH

Da la clase. Explica. Después de dar la clase...revisamos todo lo que vimos en la clase. Al otro día regresando, volvemos a repasar lo que vimos el día anterior. Nos explica en palabras. Nos enseña en películas, en el pizarrón, con trabajos acerca de lo que estamos haciendo. De poquito a poquito nos adelanta mucho. (GD, I4, 6)

He teaches the lesson. He explains. After teaching the lesson...we review everything we did in class. When we return the next day, we again review what we did the day before. He explains in words, with movies, on the blackboard, with work dealing with what we're doing. Little by little he moves us ahead. (GD, I4, 6)

Theme 3, interviewees' opinions of the educational and institutional factors that affected their use and acquisition of English, have been organized under the following four sub-themes: A) inappropriate class placements, B) curricular concerns, C) teachers' input and methodologies, and D) teachers' expectations.

The discussion of each of the sub-themes for Theme 3 will be preceded by an outline of the categories, properties, and, in some cases, sub-properties relating to the sub-theme.

Following is an outline of all findings reported in Theme 3 (Figure 12).

Figure 12: Theme 3: What immigrant students say about educational and institutional factors that affect their use and acquisition of English.

A. INAPPROPRIATE CLASS PLACEMENTS
   1. Evidenced by students' incomprehension or boredom
   2. Resulted from inaccurate tests, biased tracking systems
   3. Resulted in low English usage, low self-esteem, and poor academic preparation for further studies

B. STUDENTS' CURRICULAR CONCERNS

   1. Lack of coordinated themes to organize class content
   2. Need to acquire practical vocabulary and language functions
   3. Insufficient attention to personal connections, cultural similarities and differences
   4. Need to understand and discuss complex issues

C. STUDENTS' OPINIONS OF TEACHERS' INPUT AND METHODOLOGIES

   1. Students' opinions of how teachers make classroom input comprehensible
      a. How teachers make input comprehensible in ESL classes
      b. How teachers make input comprehensible in sheltered content classes
      c. How teachers make input comprehensible in "regular" classes
   2. Students opinions of how they become involved in classroom activities
      a. How students participate as individuals
         i. Building on *ganas* and effort
         ii. Student-initiated methodology
      b. How students participate in large groups
         i. Verbal participation
         ii. Non-verbal participation
      c. How students participate in small groups

D. STUDENTS' OPINIONS OF TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS

   1. Students' opinions of teachers' attitudes toward students
      a. Students respond best to respect
      b. Students respond best to high standards
   2. Students' opinions of classroom discipline
   3. Students' opinions of teacher-determined language choice in classrooms
      a. Students' views of teachers' attitudes towards language
      b. Students' views of teachers' language choice
      c. Students' views of teachers' policies for students' language choice in classrooms

Inappropriate Class Placements

A. INAPPROPRIATE CLASS PLACEMENTS

1. Evidenced by incomprehension or boredom
2. Resulted from inaccurate tests, biased tracking systems
3. Resulted in low English usage, low self-esteem, and poor academic preparation for further studies

Inappropriate placements were cited by 50% of the interviewees as one of the reasons they did not communicate in English in some of their classes. Three students described classes where they could neither understand nor use English. Four students talked about classes where they were bored and often stopped trying to use English. Interviewees claimed that their placements in classes were often based on unreliable tests, language proficiency requirements, and tracking systems. Their statements revealed that class placement problems resulted in low language usage, low self-esteem, and poor preparation for further studies.

Inappropriate Class Placements Evidenced by Students' Incomprehension or Boredom

Three interviewees were in classes where they said that they could not understand the instruction. In two cases, students explained that it was the method of instruction rather than the content which made them unable to function successfully. The lack of comprehensible input in Genoveva's ecology class and Yolanda's consumer math class was described in detail when discussing students' language problems. The girls stated that they had experienced difficulties when teachers relied solely on lecture as a method of instruction. In the third case, José reported that his inability to understand lectures in English was compounded by his inadequate academic background and his poor literacy skills in English which made it impossible for him to complete reading assignments in the required U.S. history text.

Four interviewees reported that two or more of their classes were not academically challenging. Claudio (ESL 1), for example, stated that all of his classes were too easy for him. He had completed the *secundaria* in Mexico and had studied for a semester at a Computer Institute, *Instituto de computación*.. He explained that when he arrived from Mexico his counselor simply gave him a schedule or, as he said it, "They put me in the computer" (CE, I2, 3). "Sometimes English classes are easy. Sometimes they're not. Spanish class is too easy. Mathematics is very, very easy...they all bore me" (CE, I2, 3). He explained that he no longer worked in some classes because teachers did not pay as much attention to him as to students who had more problems. He stated that his English teacher "pays attention to those who don't know" (CE, I1, 2).

Six out of the fourteen interviewees claimed to be in the wrong math classes. Gabriel was one of these students. The following is a description, written during my observation of a general math class, which juxtaposes Gabriel's bored reaction to classwork with Samuel's involvement:

> [The teacher assigned in-class problems using estimation. Samuel worked slowly, checking over numbers and erasing occasionally. Gabriel breathed deeply when the teacher gave the assignment. He did the problems quickly and shared his answers with two different friends while Samuel continued working.]
> Teacher: [to Gabriel] Are you sick? [patting him on the back while she looked at his paper] Good work. Would you mind helping Pedro with his problems? (11-14-90, 1)

Inappropriate Class Placements Resulted from Testing and Biased Tracking Systems

Interviewees reported that they thought that they had been put in math classes based on their placement test scores and English ability rather than their previous academic background. Marco stated that he had gotten an "A" on his math placement test but they had put him in basic math because he "didn't know English" (MN, I1, 11). Samuel had finished the *primaria* five years earlier; Gabriel had completed the *secundaria* just before entering Capital High. Both reported that they had been placed in the same math class on the basis of a math placement test. Gabriel explained that he thought he could do nothing to change classes because of his poor scores on that test during which he had been very nervous. He was waiting for his teacher to move him from his inappropriate class:

> The class is good. It's just that we hardly ever talk...It's too easy for me [making a moaning noise]...When I arrived at this school, they gave me a math test, and I didn't do well. I didn't pass it. That's why he placed me in a low class...[In Mexico] I was already almost in the high group where they had to use letters with formulas, in algebra already...She [the teacher] knows...I don't know. I never asked her to change classes for me . I think they will change me to algebra at the semester. (GC, I3, 6)

Because of the school's "lockstep" system of math placements, Gabriel, Raúl, and Marco were in their second year of unchallenging math classes. They had all started to study algebra in Mexico before coming to the U.S., but after two years they were still waiting to be placed in an algebra class at Capital High.

All three of these students stated that they thought that their math teachers were aware of their inappropriate placements. Their teachers confirmed these students' statements. Raúl's instructor, for example, told me, "Raúl's problem in here is that he knows too much for this class. This isn't exactly a brilliant class..." (11-7-90, 14). Although Raúl's teacher later transferred him to a pre-algebra class, Gabriel's teacher decided he should stay in general math. Marco was scheduled to take business mathematics rather than algebra his junior year.

Placement in a regular English class was a goal for all of the co-researchers. After completion of ESL 3, students were placed into one of the four tracks of regular English classes at Capital High: remedial, basic, college preparatory, or honors. None of the interviewees, except Ramón, could explain the placement process or how these tracks differed from one another. The following is Cecilia's story in which she explains how her former ESL teacher intervened to change her English placement from a remedial class to a college preparatory class:

> Mrs. Thompson, who used to be my ESL teacher last year, asked me which English class I had, and I told her I had remedial. She asked me, "Why do you have remedial? If you want to, you can have college prep." I said to her, "Isn't it real hard?" And she said, "No, I think you can do it." And she got together with my counselor, and she gave me a note. I gave him the note, and he changed me nto her class again. She's my teacher again, but she's not here. She had a baby, but she's the one who persuaded me that I could get into college prep. I think so. I don't know. She's the one who convinced me that I could do it. I think so. There are some really nice teachers who understand you. They sa;y, "You can." And, well, you go ahead. (CM, I1, 7)

Inappropriate Class Placements Resulted in Low English Usage, Low Self-Esteem, and Poor Academic Preparation for Further Studies

Just as Cecilia had been convinced by her teacher that she could function successfully in a college preparatory class, Adriana was convinced that she belonged in an basic English class, where she was asked to speak, read, and write very little English. Adriana explained:

> [The class] is very easy. We hardly do anything...My counselor wasn't there. There was another person there. He gave me the class... I think that the class is good for me because I have a problem with not remembering what I read. I think that the rest of it is the same. Now this semester I'm not reading books. I do work in books. If I have to read from one page to another, I can do it, but I don't have to read and then take a test. (AE, I1, 12)

Even when interviewees continued to work hard, they reported that students in the lower track English classes teased them for studying. Marco, in a remedial English class, had a teacher whom he described as challenging. He explained that his goals and study habits differed from those of other students in his class:

> I like to work because the more you work in that class, the more you learn for the exams...They [other students] don't like to work. They don't like hard work. That class isn't hard for me--just work and wanting to make progress. (MN, I2, 5)

Three co-researchers said that they wanted to take more academic classes than their counselors encouraged them to take. The following statement by Raúl was typical:

> I asked for a ceramics class, but they gave me this one [drawing]. [I would rather have a regular class.] I like history, I would like to know more about this country. (11-7-90, 5)

Co-researchers commonly took one art or music class during each semester at Capital High. Marco's situation was typical. He described himself as studious and competent. As a junior hoping to enter college, he had both an art and a music class, rather than additional academic classes, during the semester that I interviewed him.

Gabriel reported that students were excluded from some electives because of their lack of English proficiency:

> Last year--no last semester--they didn't want to put computer programming on my schedule because they said they couldn't give it to me because I didn't speak English...But this coming semester, ESL students have computer programming...So I'll see next semester. And I already know a little. For example, when I use the computers in math class, I really love it...I'm not bored that hour. (GD, I3, 6-7)

Summary of students' statements about inappropriate class placements.

Co-researchers' statements suggested that institutionalized placement procedures limited their ability to acquire English and to make academic progress. Two co-researchers described classes which they found too difficult because teachers relied solely on lecturing strategies. Placement problems reported by other students involved unchallenging required classes in mathematics and English. Placement tests were used as the only criterion for putting students into "lockstep" sequences of mathematics classes regardless of their academic backgrounds or current achievement levels. Placement in English classes was based on a biased four-tier tracking system which often assumed that ESL students belonged in the lower tracks. In the case of electives, interviewees' class schedules consistently contained numerous art or music classes at the expense of academic subjects even though students' goals included further education.

Students' Curricular Concerns

B. STUDENTS' CURRICULAR CONCERNS

1. Lack of coordinated themes to organize class content
2. Need to acquire practical vocabulary and language functions
3. Insufficient attention to personal connections, cultural similarities and differences
4. Need to understand and discuss complex issues

Interviewees at all levels of English proficiency were concerned about what they were studying. One co-researcher explained that students lost interest when the teachers did not organize the curriculum around themes that helped students explore important topics systematically. All other interviewees expressed their curricular concerns in terms of their interests and needs rather than organizational issues. Students wanted their English classes to focus on important issues so that they could make personal connections to what they were studying. Interviewees explained how much they learned when teachers made cultural connections and comparisons in their classes. They described their frustrations at not being able to understand some classes in which the content interested them.

Most of the examples cited in this sub-theme are taken from interviewees' reactions to specific curricular issues as noted during classroom observations.

Lack of Coordinated Themes in Classes

Gabriel talked about how he felt classes should be organized around unified themes rather than having "little papers...and the teacher just talking like he always did--just talking about his things" (GD, I3, 3). He compared the curricular organization of the two ESL 2 classes he was taking:

> With Mr. Pauly we hardly do any work. That's why I don't like it...Today we did a worksheet. I don't know, but it seems like we're doing the same things we did last year. Almost no one pays attention in there. There is more to doing work than understanding it...It's that we don't have any control, like of a theme. That's

> what's missing...With Mr. Kilby, we have a theme for what we're talking about. For example, this week we will be talking about drugs. We start to move with it, rising, rising--And when the theme is finished, it's finished, and we change subjects to another theme, and we work. And with Mr. Pauly, one day we do one thing. We come back the next day, and he changes us to something different. I don't know--We were talking about football teams, baseball, where they were located on a map. We got there and did a worksheet and then we did other things. There is no coordination. (GD, I3, 3)

Students Need to Be Able to Function in Everyday Situations

Beginning students talked about Life Skills and ESL 1 classes as useful. Genoveva said it was good that "they teach us about everyday life and the things that we use every day" (GM, I1, 5). Newly arrived immigrants explained that they needed to know the practical content of some ESL 1 classes where they learned labels for items such as household supplies and food. As previously stated, however, all co-researchers insisted that they needed to spend more time listening to how these practical words are used. They also said that they needed to practice them not just memorize lists of vocabulary words.

Insufficient Attention Given by Teachers to Personal Connections, Cultural Similarities and Differences

Three co-researchers reported that they had recently done projects that focused on their culture and that some of their instructors tried to relate class content to students' personal and cultural experiences. Interviewees also expressed disappointment at not being able to participate in some lessons on relevant topics where presentations, discussions, and follow-up activities were incomprehensible.

All three students in ESL 2 classes mentioned that they had enjoyed working on a project where they were able to make cultural connections:

> And we did a project during Mexican independence month...Here they call it something like "heritage" month...We had a project on the country we're from, our customs, all that we see in our country, in English. We were working on that for

> two weeks. After, we made our family trees, which is an interesting theme...Most of the students are from Mexico, but they're from different cities so that each person has his own customs. He put us into groups and the four of us decided what we were going to talk about. And we did our project...when we finished the project we had a fiesta. We brought food from the country we talked about. (GD, I3, 2)

This was the only project cited by co-researchers in which they had been invited to explain their cultural identities and values in English.

Gabriel was one of the three interviewees who explained that his teacher of sheltered U.S. history often tried to relate history to students' personal and cultural experiences:

> What that class has is that it teaches us history through the present. We can say to him, for example, *¿Qué significa esta palabra?* And I say it to him in Spanish. And he tells us the meaning in English. But he explains it to us through the present. He gives us examples about ourselves, of what happened in history. He uses us as examples. He explains everything. We talk...Sometimes we make comparisons with Mexico, with its system of government. It's communication. I like it. (GD, I3, 10)

Both Antonio and Gabriel explained that their teacher had helped them make personal connections during the following interchanges in their sheltered U.S. history class:

> Teacher: (in English) Some Americans wanted to send slaves back to Africa. Do you think that was right?
> Gabriel: (in Spanish) Maybe they would have been happier.
> Antonio: (in Spanish) They shouldn't have made them go.
> Teacher: (in English) I was born in Mexico, but I have been here for so many years that I feel like the United States is my home. I like to go back to visit, but the U.S. is my home. I don't even speak Spanish like you guys anymore. My daughter only speaks a little. She wouldn't want to go live in Mexico for the rest of her life. How many of you want to go back?
> [Only one hand went up--a girl's.]
> Teacher: (in English) How long have you been here?
> Gabriel: (in Spanish) Two years.
> Teacher: (in English) That's why you still think about your country.
> Gabriel: [shakes head yes] (11-29-90, 2)

During my classroom visits, I observed interviewees' interest in teachers' references to cultural similarities or differences. In an ESL pre-reading class, for example, Genoveva took notes as Mrs. Mitchell wrote several examples of Mexican and American names on the blackboard while trying to explain a cultural difference in the use of family names:

> On your papers you need to put your name and your father's last name. I understand that in Mexico you use your mother's name, too. That's very nice. In the United States we use your father's name. (10-25-90, 11)

A Life Skills teacher failed to comment on this distinction which resulted in ten minutes of confusion for José and his classmates who asked for my help in filling out forms with first, middle, and last names (10-17-90, 1).

Raúl explained that it was useful for his mathematics teacher to call students' attention to the difference in the use of commas and periods in the U.S. and Mexico:

> We have a problem. Some of you are using Mexico's system. Maybe it's not because you just came to the U.S.. Maybe your parents taught you (putting an example on the overhead projector: 43.527.42). Some of you are putting two decimals because in Mexico commas are points, and points are commas. I understand what you mean if you are consistent, but you can't have two points in one number. Try to change over to the system we use in the U.S.. (11-7-90, 16).

Gabriel reported that he was happy to respond when the teacher of his sheltered biology class brought some Mexican history into his lesson on hybridizing:

> Teacher: Hybridizing helps us. Many animals and plants are hybridized. (showing a picture of corn on the video screen) What's this?
> Students: Corn.
> Teacher: Where was corn first raised?
> Gabriel: Mexico. (smiling broadly)
> Teacher: By whom?
> Gabriel: The Mayans.
> Teacher: Corn used to be very small. Through hybridizing it is larger and has different colors. (11-15-90, 12)

Cecilia made it clear, however, that not all students from Mexico are automatically interested in making cultural connections to their homeland. After I had not visited Cecilia's sheltered U.S. history class for a few days, I asked her if they had discussed the Mexican American War yet since I had wanted to hear the students' views on these issues. Cecilia said that they had "kind of skipped over it." She told me that neither history nor the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo were of great interest to her:

> Maybe yes--maybe no because, well, I don't like history very much. I have never liked it. It has never interested me. It's true. I have never paid much attention to it...From the time I was in Mexico it wasn't my favorite subject. (CM, I2, 6)

Students Need to Understand and Discuss Complex Issues in English

Interviewees discussed many instances of not understanding or using English in classes even when the curriculum matched their interests and needs. They said that some teachers were unaware of the fact that not all of the students could understand what they were saying or participate in English. For example, in the ESL pre-reading class that Gabriel liked because of its thematic organization and relevant curriculum, two of the interviewees told me that they could not understand the presentations or discussions. During a class in which drugs were discussed, the teacher caught students' attention with the statement: "I hate gangs. I hate violence. I hate drugs." When he started to discuss particular situations, however, about half of the class had their heads on their desks or were talking to each other in Spanish. Occasionally, individuals giggled when he said the word "sex" or "condom." Only a few students contributed to a class discussion.

In a government class I saw monolingual American students become very involved in a discussion of Japanese economic interests in the United States. There were seven students who did most of the talking, but native English speakers who did not participate verbally reacted by laughing, nodding in agreement or disagreement, and moving their heads in the directions of the speakers. The monolingual students assumed fact-finding tasks so that the class could start to take action on the issue. The five Spanish speakers in the room, all of whom were in advanced ESL or regular English classes, sat quietly and passively throughout the discussion and subsequent strategy-planning session. Bárbara, whom I was following that day, fell asleep. After class she told me that she was interested in the general topic which she understood from what was written on the board and from bits of dialog. She said, however, that she could not understand most of what was said and did not feel she could join the fast-paced discussion (11-27-90, 12).

Summary of students' curricular concerns.

In summary, co-researchers reported that curriculum affected their motivation for learning English. One interviewee explained that his ESL classes lacked unifying themes that students could become involved in and follow. Co-researchers stated that it was important for them to learn "survival" English when they first arrived and to keep learning about "important things."

Students described teachers at Capital High who tried to make cultural and personal connections that motivated students to understand and use English. In a few classes, however, teachers presented current issues without making their input comprehensible to language minority students. Interviewees explained that they were often faced with uninteresting lessons that they could understand or very interesting lessons they could not understand. Teachers' input and methodologies, therefore, were discussed by interviewees as important educational factors that affected their acquisition and use of English.

Students' Opinions of Teachers' Input and Methodologies

C. STUDENTS' OPINIONS OF TEACHERS' INPUT AND METHODOLOGIES

1. Students' opinions of how teachers make classroom input comprehensible
    a. How teachers make input comprehensible in ESL classes
    b. How teachers make input comprehensible in sheltered content classes
    c. How teachers make input comprehensible in "regular" classes
2. Students opinions of how they become involved in classroom activities
    a. How students participate as individuals
        i. Building on *ganas* and effort
        ii. Student-initiated methodology
    b. How students participate in large groups
        i. Verbal participation
        ii. Non-verbal participation
    c. How students participate in small groups

Students' Opinions of How Teachers Make Classroom Input Comprehensible

Co-researchers explained how they were being taught as well as what they were being taught. They gave descriptions of helpful verbal and non-verbal strategies used by teachers in their ESL, sheltered content, and regular classes. Helpful non-verbal strategies included use of gestures, pictures, objects, demonstrations, and texts. Helpful verbal strategies included speaking loudly, clearly, slowly, repeating, exaggerating, and simplifying language.

Students' Opinions of How Teachers Make Input Comprehensible in ESL Classes

Genoveva described the classes taught by her ESL 1 teacher, Mrs. Martin, who used a wide variety of strategies to increase students' comprehension:

> I really like them [Mrs. Martin's classes] because we learn in a way that isn't boring...I understand what is happening...She tries to explain to us with her hands so that we understand her, or she draws for us so we know what the word is...She teaches with objects, pointing to what it is. (GM, I1, 7)

Genoveva mentioned non-verbal techniques, such as use of gestures, pictures, and objects, as being especially helpful. During my seven visits to Mrs. Martin's classroom, I also saw this teacher use her drawing skills, maps, posters, magazine pictures, cartoons, costumes, and theatrical techniques to aid students' comprehension.

José explained (ESL 1) how his Life Skills teacher's verbal skills enabled him to understand her lessons: "It's one of the classes that I like best because the teacher explains well. I understand her voice better...She has more patience, a lot more patience" (JT, I4, 5). Although José did not specify what he meant by his teacher's voice, during my visits to her class I noted that she spoke loudly, clearly, and slowly enough for the forty students in her cavernous room to hear her. She often paraphrased and repeated her statements.

Students' Opinions of How Teachers Make Input Comprehensible in Sheltered Content Classes

When talking about some of their sheltered content teachers, interviewees mentioned the same teaching strategies that helped them understand their effective ESL teachers. Gabriel said this about his sheltered biology teacher:

> I like the way Mr. Terrell teaches, how he moves us along little by little. We use the book. We watch a movie. He explains it to us...I also understand Mr. Chavez, but because I can ask him in Spanish. (GD, I4, 6)

Gabriel showed an awareness of verbal and non-verbal strategies that teachers often think goes unnoticed. He described the spiraling techniques used by his instructor who reviewed previous knowledge before presenting new vocabulary and concepts. He made a distinction between the methodologies used by two of his teachers. He stated that he understood his biology teacher because of his effective use of verbal and non-verbal teaching strategies; he understood his history teacher primarily because students were able to ask questions in Spanish.

Three interviewees described strategies that Ms. Henry, a monolingual sheltered content math teacher, used in her classroom to help them understand. Students explained that she had different colored papers for warm-ups, tests, and worksheets so that students knew what activity would follow when she held up, for example, a piece of pink paper. Students also said that Ms. Henry wrote most problems and important words on the blackboard and that she repeated directions and instructions. They indicated, also, that they could help each other in Spanish in her class.

The following interchanges from one of Ms. Henry's classes demonstrate some of the techniques that students described as successful, as well as the variety of ways that she checked students' comprehension (non-verbal responses, short verbal responses in English and Spanish):

> Teacher: Raise your right hands.
> [Students raised their hands, making necessary corrections after looking around the room.]
> Teacher: Don't forget to move decimal points from the right side. How do you say right in Spanish?
> Student: *Derecha,*
> Teacher: How do you say left in Spanish?
> Student: *Izquierda.*
> Teacher: Open your books to page 98. [She wrote 98 on the board.] Remember that the product is the answer you get when you multiply. For example, nine times four equals thirty-six. Thirty-six is the product [stressed] of nine and four. [She wrote this example on the board,underlining the product: 9 X 4 = 36.]
> Teacher: Remember we are going to estimate, guess. You do it in your mind. [She pointed to her head.] For example when we want to multiply twenty-three and nineteen, we can estimate, guess, if we don't have to know an exact answer. [She wrote on the board, repeating her previous statement as she wrote: 23 X 19.] What number is closer to 23? 20 or 30?
> Student: 20
> [Teacher wrote 20 on the board.]
> Teacher: What number should I write for nineteen?
> Student: 20
> [Teacher finished the problem on the board, writing 20 X 20 = 400]
> Teacher: Wasn't that easy? Remember that a product is the answer you get when you multiply and estimate means to guess.
> [Teacher wrote the words product and estimate on the board with their meanings.] (10-18-90, 1-2)

Ms. Henry's strategies can be compared to those used in a lesson in the consumer mathematics class from which Yolanda asked to be transferred because "the teacher...didn't give any examples. He just gave us work without explaining...[He spoke faster]" (YA, I4, 3). While visiting her class, I observed this lesson which matched Yolanda's description:

> Teacher: Open your books to page 4.5. Take out your work for 4.5.
> [The teacher spent about eight minutes quickly reading answers aloud while sitting behind a podium at the front of the room. He interrupted the reading twice to work problems on the board. Three or four students appeared to be correcting their assignments. One girl cleaned out her backpack. Another girl wrote a letter. A third put make-up on. One boy read a newspaper. One had his head on his desk. Another student read an English textbook. A girl wrote something behind her purse. Two students chatted.]
> Teacher: Any questions?
> [Silence]
> Teacher: Do the problems on page 90 for the rest of the period. (11-2-90-4)

Students' Opinions of How Teachers Make Input Comprehensible in "Regular" Classes

Co-researchers reported that some "regular" classes were easy to understand because the content itself demanded demonstration. Archery, volleyball, and gymnastics have already been discussed as physical education skills that interviewees were able to perform primarily because of teachers' or other students' modeling.

Students in typing and computer applications classes also explained how easy it was for them to understand in-class activities because of their teachers' use of verbal and non-verbal cues. Yolanda's description was typical:

> The teacher puts pages there (on blackboard). And as we do our work there is a model and some pages where we can see what we have to do or she tells us that in a minute we are going to do what she tells us. And she numbers the lines and we have to do however many she says. (YA, I1, 9)

Interviewees described art classes as functioning through demonstration. All students in art made statements similar to Cecilia's: "The truth is that it's very easy all of the time" (CM, I1, 13). During an observation, I noted the following class procedures that illustrate Cecilia's comment:

> The teacher spent five minutes giving directions in simple English. The title of the project was on the blackboard: "Symmetrical designs with geometrical shapes." When explaining orally the teacher paraphrased symmetrical with "the same on both sides." She pointed to examples of the project that were already completed, asking students to notice "the different shapes, the geometrical shapes." She demonstrated how to divide the paper in quarters or halves before beginning to work. Next, she pointed to and explained the step by step directions and due dates for their portfolios which were also written on the board. Students got their supplies and spent the rest of the period working on their projects. (11-2-90, 12)

Students in ESL 3 and regular English explained that they had to depend on their literacy skills when teachers did not instruct through verbal and non-verbal strategies. The most extreme case of non-involvement by a teacher was described by Bárbara:

> He doesn't speak at all. He just gives us the book and he gives us those questions on the unit, and you look them up. Every week is the same. You look up the questions, you write them, you take the tests. Every week is the same. (BT, I1, 20)

Barbara indicated that she often did the written work without understanding the questions or the answers.

Ramón, on the other hand, described his honors classes as thought-provoking. He added that his English and government teachers relied extensively on texts and visual aids, including the blackboard, the overhead projector, posters, and videotapes. Ramón said that all of these these strategies helped him to understand both teachers' oral presentations and student discussions better. He described his government class as "fun" and said he enjoyed the challenge of his English class saying, "I told you we had to think in there" (1-9-91, 7).

Students Opinions of How They Become Involved in Classroom Activities

Co-researchers described the different ways that teachers encouraged students to become involved in classroom activities: as individuals, in large groups, and in small groups. They stated that teachers had to build on each student's *ganas* and effort which were the key factors in learning. Interviewees gave examples of their verbal and non-verbal participation in large-group activities. They reported that small-group work provided more opportunities for linguistic interaction.

Students' Opinions of How They Participate as Individuals

Ganas, the desire to prove themselves, communicate, and study, was stressed by students as the overriding factor in their success as second language learners. They specified, however, that students became discouraged if their *ganas* were not supplemented by both their own hard work and teachers' support. Two interviewees added that ineffective teaching methods could be overcome by students who really wanted to learn and found their own ways to do it.

Claudio explained the importance of students' personal commitment to learn:

> Teachers can speak, can teach the same way, but if students don't pay attention to them or don't like the way they explain, that's all there is to it. If you understand them or if you pay attention even if they don't explain real well, you will make progress. (CE, 11, 13)

Raúl's experiences supported Claudio's opinion. Raúl explained that his motivation and effort overcame his boredom in an remedial, individualized reading program from which his teacher eventually recommended his transfer based on his high achievement scores (11-7-90, 5).

Interviewees stressed that teachers' academic and personal support made it easier for motivated students and offered possibly the only lifeline for students whose *ganas* or efforts were lacking.

Students' Opinions of How They Participate in Large Groups

Students reported that they participated both verbally and non-verbally in large-group activities. The verbal participation that they described included choral repetitions, oral reading, and discussions. Choral repetitions were most commonly reported in beginning language classes where students said that they were asked to spell words in unison; repeat words after the teacher; and say jazz chants.

Individual oral reading was the most common way that students participated verbally at all levels and in all classes. Sometimes students read sentences or paragraphs they had written, but they indicated that they mainly read from their texts. As previously discussed, some co-researchers believed that reading aloud was synonymous with class participation and some teachers indicated that providing opportunities to read aloud was sufficient language usage in English.

Bárbara stated that she thought reading aloud in her ESL 3 class was a waste of time:

> We spend a lot of time reading [aloud], and I think it's wasted time because I don't think it helps us make progress. We don't learn well...Only one person reads for the whole class. Everyone else is distracted. The teacher says he is good to us, but

> he is too good. [laughter] He doesn't require much of us...And everyone is talking. They do what they want to do. It is very difficult to learn. (BT, I1, 14)

Co-researchers reported that class discussions were limited. Antonio's description was typical:

> Gabriel and I are the ones who ask him [teacher of sheltered U.S. history] most often. The others just sit there listening. I don't know if it's important to them, but we have to answer. (AN, I1, 12)

Interviewees said that some teachers invited questions and told students not to worry about making mistakes. The following interchanges, recorded during class observations, are examples of teachers' support of students' responses:

> Teacher [Marco's remedial English class]: What does her hair look like?
> Student: Black rope.
> Teacher: Good! Maybe even oily, black rope."
> [The teacher walked around the room, inviting students' questions, reading students' work, saying things like: "Oh, neat! What would happen if you changed this?"] (12-17-90, 8)

> Teacher [Ramón's honors government class]: You need to be more global thinkers. You need to go beyond the worksheet mentality.
> Student:: I just have textbook answers for this one.
> Teacher: Let's start with textbook answers and build on them together. (1-8-91, 6)

Co-researchers did not describe all teachers as open or supportive. Adriana reported that she learned little from interchanges in her basic English class where the teacher sometimes asked questions but often dismissed students' responses as inconsequential. Adriana stated that she never participated orally in that class (12-12-90, 9-10).

Interviewees stated that some teachers encouraged students to participate in classes non-verbally. During my classroom visitations I noted many examples of students giving non-verbal responses. Sometimes this simply involved raising hands to indicate yes or no, as in a U.S. history class where Mr.Lopez asked: "How many of you would like to go back?" (11-29-90, 2). In other cases short segments of lessons were based on these types of responses. In Life Skills class, for example, students were asked to place a label next to an object located in the room (10-17-90, 15). In an ESL 1 class, students pantomimed movements to show they understood vocabulary in response to teacher's commands such as: "Violeta, stand up and show me how to use a rake" (10-16-90, 7).

Large segments of typing classes involved non-verbal responses that indicated comprehension:

> Teacher: Relax your fingers. Get ready for two five-minute timings.
> [Students sat at "work stations" with all materials ready.]
> Teacher: Get ready for timing. Eyes on copy. Ready. Type.
> [Students typed until a bell rang, indicating the end of the five-minute period.]
> Teacher: Circle your errors. You'll get the best of the two timings.
> [Students circled their errors.]
> Teacher: Get ready for timing. Eyes on copy. Ready. Type.
> [Students typed until a bell rang, indicating the end of the five-minute period.]
> Teacher: Circle your errors. Record your best time.
> [Students circled and recorded.] (12-3-90, 3).

Students in both ESL and content classes said it was easier to show their teachers they understood by doing something rather than responding in English.

Students' Opinions of How They Participate in Small Groups

Students relied heavily on their friends to help them with problems relating to language and class content. José explained that this was a cultural habit they brought with them from Mexico:

> [In Mexico] it's not exactly in groups but it's two or three friends who ask each other, normally two of them. They explain to each other, and if the two of them don't understand, they ask someone else. And that's how it's explained. (JT, I1, 4-5)

Co-researchers reported that they learned class content well through cooperative activities. Many of these activities involved experiences or experiments such as those done in Mr. Terrell's sheltered biology class. Antonio explained how small-group work helped him:

> He puts us to work. He explains it on the board, and we do it in groups. There are four of us. (AN, I1, 14)

> When we were looking at cells...he gave us a microscope to look into to see vegetable and animal cells. Then he had us draw them and discuss them. You learn like that. (AN, I1, 15)

Co-researchers suggested to me during interviews that the use of small-group activities would improve some of their classes where lecture was the primary method of instruction. Antonio said this about his sheltered U.S. history class:

> I think it would be better in groups because that way you can collect your classmates' opinions in order to form your own. That way it's important for you to think and have them ask for your opinions. (AN, I1, 14)

Bárbara stated that she would like her government teacher to break the class into small groups since that would be the only way she would feel comfortable participating in a discussion with native speakers of English (11-27-90, 12).

Ramón said he would like more small group discussions:

> In government class we do a lot of discussing about our work. There are lots of topics that the teacher gives us to discuss among ourselves...in groups of four. It's like a competition. You have to present your material...From that we ask questions. You really have to think... In the English class...you think a lot, but it's short on discussions. There aren't enough. (RF, I1, 8)

Co-researchers explained that most of the small-group work among Latino students was done in Spanish. José's comments, for example, indicated that English was not used by classmates working in small groups in his ESL 1 class:

> It's only for when we need to do work that is hard to explain to the other students--so they will understand. Then we get into groups so that students themselves can explain it to each other. That's how they understand better because they speak Spanish, and they understand each other better. (JT, I1, 4)

As previously discussed, the only examples of Spanish-speaking students using English for academic purposes in a classroom with mainly Latino students occurred in highly structured activities in cooperative learning groups where the teacher insisted that English be used. After a values-clarification activity in an ESL 2 class, for example, I questioned Raúl about his group's use of Spanish:

> Researcher: Why didn't you discuss that in English?
> Raúl: They didn't want to.
> Researcher: Do you think that you could have discussed that in English?
> Raúl: I think so.
> Researcher: You tried to ask your group members questions in English.
> Raúl: Yes, and they answered in Spanish. We need a more demanding ESL teacher. (11-8-90, 9)

Although co-researchers did not often use English when working in cooperative learning groups, they reported this type of activity to be very successful in helping them learn class content.

Summary of students' opinions of teachers' input and methodologies .

Co-researchers gave descriptions of effective verbal and non-verbal strategies used by teachers in their ESL, sheltered content, and regular classes. Beginning and intermediate language students stated they were unable to function in classes where material was only presented through lectures. Effective non-verbal cues such as gestures, drawings, pictures, and pantomimes were cited by interviewees at all levels, but beginning and intermediate students explained that they were especially dependent on them. Advanced students indicated that their literacy skills in English sometimes enabled them to compensate for a lack of comprehensible teacher input. Students said they relied heavily on any notes given them by teachers. They indicated that teachers' verbal and non-verbal strategies usually determined whether they understood class content and procedures.

Interviewees agreed that an individual's motivation and effort were key factors in achieving linguistic and academic progress. Two co-researchers argued that an individual's motivation and effort could overcome some, if not all deficiencies in teaching methodology. Most co-researchers agreed that they depended on teachers to involve them individually and through large-group and small-group activities.

Students' Opinions of Teachers' Expectations

D. STUDENTS' OPINIONS OF TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS

1. Students' opinions of teachers' attitudes toward students
    a. Students respond best to respect
    b. Students respond best to high standards
2. Students' opinions of classroom discipline
3. Students' opinions of teacher-determined language choice in classrooms
    a. Teachers' attitude towards language

b. Teachers' use of language
c. Teachers' policies for students' language choice in classrooms

Students' Opinions of Teachers' Attitudes Toward Students

Co-researchers said they responded best to teachers who were *buena gente*, good people, who respected students and pressured them to work hard through high expectations.

Students Respond Best to Respect

Genoveva described Mrs. Martin, her ESL 1 teacher as *buena gente*, saying she was "nice, pleasant. She tries to make you feel good so you can learn more" (GM, I2, 9). Carlos added details to describe the same teacher whom he also thought was *buena gente:* "If I say to her, 'Will you lend me this?' she says, 'Yes'...If I ask her a favor, she says, 'Yes'" (CD, I1, 12). Some said they liked "serious" instructors while others stated they liked teachers who were entertaining. All agreed that it was most important for teachers to show respect for students, to be*buena gente.*

Interviewees' comments suggested that teachers' lack of respect for students resulted in a lack of learning in some classes. Bárbara described the following situation in her mathematics class:

> [In math] I'm not learning much because, as you saw, well, that teacher is a little hyper...He explains well. He gives plenty of examples...but his way of treating students is a little difficult. (BT, I2,1)

I noted many examples of this lack of respect during my six visits to this teacher's classroom with three different co-researchers. For example, when students answered incorrectly in his basic classes, the teacher routinely gave an "Elmer Fudd" reaction, suggesting that the responses and/or students were stupid. The following interchanges took place in his classes during my visits:

> Teacher: [To a female monolingual American student who was picking lint off her sweater] Is it your time of month? Are you shedding? (11-7-90, 14)

> Teacher: [To a male student with his hair in a ponytail who answered incorrectly] What's the matter? Is your rubberband tied too tight? (11-27-90, 5)

This same teacher stated that he reacted differently to students in his higher level mathematics class because "this is my best class. They ask questions. They think" (12-10-90).

Cecilia, however, stated that she was interested in moving ahead, making progress despite teachers' attitudes.

> There were six of us in the class...They all left but I stayed. I remember that they left because they didn't understand English , and they said they couldn't speak English. And I said to myself, "Where would I go? I already had the class before this on. I can neither go backward nor forward." I remember that he used to ask me questions...I liked him like he was because he was hard. I know he's strict, but I like him...he made me answer. I got a "C" in that class, but I answered everything he asked me. (CM, I1, 10)

Students Respond Best to Teachers' High Standards

Cecilia stated that she could easily tell whether teachers cared about students' learning. She said that she missed her English teacher whose confidence had encouraged her to move from remedial English to college prep English:

> Nobody is concerned about my English...maybe it's because he [current teacher] is a substitute. My [other] English teacher used to be concerned about it. I try to do my best--sometimes to get a book at home and start to read and write--once in a while. But not that he knows about. (CM, I2, 7)

Ramón, tried to articulate the difference between teachers' expectations in his regular classes and in his honors classes:

> This year I made a very drastic change coming from what you call regular classes to the most difficult ones that this school offers. I am learning a lot. The change is extraordinary...[In regular classes] you really don't have to think. You just have to put down, use the facts that they give you. It's totally different, totally.
> (RE, I1, 1, 7-8)

Teachers' statements about their expectations for students matched students' perceptions. As described by students, some of the instructors at Capital High acknowledged the intelligence and potential of their language minority students and accepted the challenge of educating them in English. Other teachers questioned students' intelligence and the need to make any changes to accommodate their needs.

Mrs. Vasquez, a teacher of Spanish for Spanish speakers who has worked extensively with Latino students, insisted on high expectations for all students:

> I think kids don't make it because of work responsibilities and a lack of support by teachers and counselors. Quiet ones get overlooked. I was lucky to be identified as bright and nurtured. Others aren't so lucky. Expectations have to be high for all students...They need to be treated according to their individual needs. Many of them are really bright...Not only is there a difference between the number of years they went to school, but also between the quality of their schools. (12-4-90, 1)

Many teachers across disciplines at Capital High showed students that they had confidence in their abilities. Teachers comments to students during classes demonstrated their expectations for students.

Mr. Kraft, an art teacher, told his class they needed to try harder: "You need to do quality work--something you're proud of. You can do it. Grades are going down because you don't care about your work" (12-18-90, 3). He constantly walked around his room offering suggestions and encouragement. He explained his actions in this way: "I do everything they tell teachers not to do. I threaten. I yell. I coerce. I care. I take it home and worry about it at night" (12-18-90, 3).

Mr. Thompson, a government teacher, also refused to accept lowered standards for his students. He insisted that they think and not just look for pat answers. "I'm pretty hard on these kids. I have to keep telling myself how much farther ahead they are than I was at their age" (1-9-91, 11a).

There were, however, lowered expectations for many students at Capital High, of native speakers of English and immigrants alike. An English teacher tried to explain many teachers' attitudes in this way: "These kids aren't going to four-year colleges. Kids in this school generally don't go" (11-7-90, 2).

As demonstrated by the statement of this history teacher, language minority students' abilities were often questioned:

> They follow everything we do exactly in the book. They would be lost if we did a thematic approach like the new social studies framework recommends. They couldn't handle it. Many of them are not very bright. (11-26-91, 7)

Some teachers at Capital High refused to discuss the challenge of teaching second language students. The following lunchtime conversation took place in a teachers' lounge with Mrs. Richardson who taught both remedial and honors English. Three other teachers were present, including Dorothy Martin:

> Researcher: I'm looking for one or two more students to interview. Could you recommend any of your students who were in ESL last year?
> Ms. Richardson: I don't know which of my students came from ESL classes, and it wouldn't make any difference if I did. They have to learn the same stuff anyway. I teach the same way if they're ESL students or not.
> [The Researcher and Dorothy Martin continued to discuss ESL students.]
> Ms. Richardson: Can we talk about something else? I'm about ready to get sick talking about ESL students. Let's talk about Christmas or anything.
> [The topic of the group's conversation changed to Christmas.]
> [After lunch when the Researcher and Dorothy Martin were walking to Dorothy's classroom]
> Dorothy Martin: Chris is my friend, but she doesn't want to deal with LEP kids. She and about 75% of the staff are the same. They just don't want to deal with them. (12-6-90, 7)

Ms. Richardson apologized for her comments before other teachers arrived in the lounge the next day for lunch. After that we only talked about Christmas.

Classroom visitations also provided many examples of teachers' lowered expectations for students in both sheltered content and regular classes at Capital High. A sheltered content history teacher made 43% a passing grade of C on a multiple-choice test after acknowledging that many students had copied answers (12-18-90, 8). A teacher of basic English gave homework twice during the first semester of the school year (12-10-90, 14). A consumer math teacher disregarded the inattention of the majority of the students in his class (11-6-90, 9).

Students' Opinions of Classroom Discipline

Co-researchers said that there were differences between classroom discipline in Mexican and American schools. They made a distinction between discipline and "strictness," stating that both a lack of discipline and too much "strictness" interfered with students' learning.

Discipline Differs in Mexican and American Classrooms

Since all but one of the co-researchers had arrived from Mexico within the last three years, they naturally compared discipline at Capital High to what they had recently experienced in Mexican schools. The two students who had attended private schools in Mexico said that teachers were stricter in Mexican private schools where students would never speak while teachers were presenting a lesson. Claudio said that students did as they were told because "it doesn't make sense to fool around because we know that we're paying money for the school" (CE, I1, 5). Claudio added:

> "Maybe there are problems here because we're free to do what we want. Not over there. Here if you use bad language with a teacher, there's hardly a problem. Over there if you use bad language with a teacher, they throw you out of school. You have to change schools" (CE, I1, 5)

Genoveva, the other student who had gone to private schools, agreed that teachers demanded more disciplined behavior from students in Mexican private schools . She added that Mexican public schools were different:

> "In public schools, if you don't pay attention, it's your problem. If you don't pass a grade, how you study is your problem. There the teacher doesn't say anything. If you're older, you know what you're doing" (GM, I2, 6).

The twelve co-researchers who had gone to Mexican public schools acknowledged that the teachers at Capital High were generally stricter than those they had had in Mexico. Raúl described the motivating force of certificates and tests in Mexico:

> Here it's hard because they can throw you out of classes. Discipline, well, is firmer, a little firmer here. Over there, it's a question of work. If you want to pass the class, you have to work. If you don't work, you don't pass it...If you don't pass it, you aren't going to receive the certificate. So we have to study for the tests before we can receive the certificates. (RQ, I1, 7)

Co-researchers volunteered descriptions of classes at Capital High where they claimed that an excess or a lack of discipline hindered their use of English. Twelve made the distinction between having discipline and being too strict.

Students Dislike "Strictness"

Co-researchers stated that they thought teachers did not have to be strict to maintain discipline in their classrooms. Claudio, for example, thought that it was a waste of a student's time to have a strict teacher who made them write sentences one hundred times (CE, I1, 13). Raúl said it was unnecessary for one of his teachers to insist on absolute silence while students worked independently (RQ, I1, 2). Bárbara talked about a teacher whom she and her friends feared because he threatened and demeaned students, saying things like: "Get with the program, Pablo. One more thing and you're out of here. If you had a brain, you'd be dangerous" (11-8-90, 18).

The situations described above were typical of those in which co-researchers said they reacted negatively to teachers whom they described as too strict. Interviewees felt quite helpless in these situations, as Adriana admitted: "That's how he teaches. We have to learn at the same time" (AE, I2, 11).

Students Need Discipline

Interviewees were also concerned with the lack of discipline that interfered with learning in some of their classes. They were most vocal about the lack of discipline in some of their ESL and English classes. Raúl's reaction to his ESL 2 class was similar to those of all co-researchers who had the same teacher:

> [The class] isn't easy, but it needs discipline and more student participation. The teacher tells us, "You're going to work this week, and on Friday you will see a movie--but you have to do your work. But we don't do our work lots of weeks, and we still get the reward. There isn't any discipline. Sometimes he is demanding but only with a single individual, only then because that person is disruptive, going here and there. He becomes firmer. How do you say it? He becomes more

> forceful. [Sometimes it's necessary to be firmer] because the students don't understand. (RQ, I1, 5)

When I asked Raúl what he thought of the tickets that this teacher used to motivate students, he replied:

> I think the tickets interest us a lot because the more tickets you have...the more work you do, the more chances you'll have to win. We don't know what the prize is...This way they open their mouths a little in class. Yesterday, I noticed a little change. I saw some people who raised their hands for the tickets...The teacher is doing it right. I just think that there is a lack of discipline. If there were discipline they [tickets] wouldn't be necessary. (RQ, I2, 7)

Margarita reported serious discipline problems in her ESL 3 class where she was being taught by a long-term substitute teacher whom she described as quite different from her class' regular teacher. Once again her comments were typical of those of all interviewees in ESL 3 classes:

> Now with the man who is substituting for Mrs. Thompson it isn't important to speak English...Everyone is yelling. Everyone gets up. They don't pay attention to the teacher...I don't like having class with him...He just puts words on the blackboard. We copy them. Or he gives us words that are written incorrectly and we have to write them correctly. That's all. (MD, I1, 5)

Margarita's reaction to the ESL 3 teacher's use of tickets mirrors Raúl's:

> I think they [tickets] are a way of getting most of us to try to participate in class because there are very few who participate in class...They're necessary because no one pays any attention to him. Mrs. Thompson never gave them out except to get us to be seated...One time I was still standing [when the bell rang], and she didn't give me my ticket. After that I understood that I had to be seated. But I didn't know why. (MD, I2, 8)

Student Opinions of Teacher-Determined Language Choice in the Classroom

Co-researchers reported a wide variation in teacher-determined language choice in the classroom. They described teachers' attitude toward language, use of language, and statements that encouraged or forbade students to use either English or Spanish in the classroom. Interviewees differentiated between teachers who denigrated Spanish and those who wanted them to speak English so they would acquire it faster.

Students' Views of Teachers' Attitude Towards Language

Interviewees reported that some of their teacher respected all languages, including Spanish. Students' perceptions were supported by this interchange that I recorded during a sheltered biology lesson on evolution:

> Teacher: What is homo sapiens?
> Francisco: Intelligent man.
> Teacher: Spanish: ***hombre***. French: ***homme***. Latin: *homo*.
> Because we are human we learn to communicate through language. We can learn to communicate in more than one language. In this class, that is especially important. We are intelligent. We can communicate. You are l earning my language, and I am learning yours a little. It is more important for you, right now, to learn mine. No other animal learns language. (12-12-90, 5)

Even if such philosophical statements were not directly expressed, similar attitudes were conveyed by teachers who played with language usage and allowed their students to do so. Co-researchers described their sheltered math teacher's open attitude toward Spanish which this humorous interchange illustrates:

> Teacher: Notebooks tomorrow.
> Spanish-speaking student: No books tomorrow. [laughter]
> Teacher: Notebooks tomorrow. Notebooks tomorrow. [stressing the pronunciation of the letter t] *Mañana* notebooks [Laughter]. (11-2-90, 3)

This process of playing with language also occurred in an ESL 3 class where the teacher introduced tongue twisters after studying alliteration in poetry. Students persuaded Cecilia to read in Spanish from an international book of tongue twisters. Three Mexican American girls laughed happily and continued reading aloud in Spanish for their classmates. Monolingual speakers in the class listened and clapped. Several monolingual students told me that it was fun to listen to the sounds of different languages. Cecilia said that this was the first time that these Mexican Americans had spoken Spanish in class (12-14-90, 2).

Co-researchers reported a negative attitude toward languages from other monolingual teachers. The following comments were typical of those that students said they resented:

> Teacher: This is the homework assignment. Barb, are you getting this down?
> Bárbara: Yes.
> Teacher: Sure you are! You're talking to Juan. Just because I'm not speaking Spanish doesn't mean you don't have to listen! (11-28-90, 5)

Students' Views of Teachers' Language Choice

Four students reported that their English teachers had purchased Spanish dictionaries so that they could help their students understand. Eight interviewees reported that some teachers learned Spanish words to help students understand lessons. Mr. Terrell, the sheltered biology teacher, for example, said the word *congrejo* when he did not have a picture of a crab to illustrate a point he had made through pictures of other organisms (10-30-90, 13). On another occasion he showed students the word *carácter dominante*, dominant trait, on a bilingual video presentation of genetics while saying: "If that helps you write it down. If it doesn't, don't bother" (11-14-90, 11). Antonio explained that Mr. Terrell's advice made students think about what bilingual study strategies were most effective for them (11-14-90, 12). Raúl said he felt he was being given credit for being an intelligent student (11-14-90, 12).

Although five interviewees said they were tolerant of and sometimes amused by teachers' mistakes in Spanish, students' reactions to teachers' use of Spanish was not always positive. Two interviewees in an ESL 1 class, taught by Mr. Morrison, said his class was fun but that they would rather hear and speak English in their English class. They explained that this teacher mixed Spanish and English while teaching his classes. During my classroom visits, I noted that he consistently used this type of language: "As a group--*juntos*--not just María *solamente*" (10-10-90, 7). Interviewees and other students told me that sometimes they could not understand what Mr. Morrison said in either Spanish or English (10-10-90, 8; 10-16-90, 6).

Students' Views of Teachers' Policies for Students' Language Choice in the Classroom

In addition to teachers' attitudes toward language and use of language, students also took their cues from the ways that teachers encouraged the use of English or Spanish among students. Co-researchers said that they appreciated the efforts of monolingual teachers who respected their language and tried to help them learn in English. Interviewees were ambivalent about the language choice policies of bilingual teachers.

Co-researchers described monolingual teachers who encouraged English usage in different ways, only some of which interviewees thought were effective. Five students talked about an ESL teacher, no longer at Capital High, who stressed that they needed English to be successful in this country. According to students, he showed respect for Spanish language and customs, but insisted that they speak English in his English class. Students indicated that they respected him and spoke English.

Interviewees in ESL classes described situations where teachers had ineffective policies for encouraging English in the classroom. Raúl said this about his teacher's failure to promote English usage in his ESL 2 class:

> "In groups of two or three, talk to one another, but in English," he tells us. He doesn't want us to speak Spanish because everyone speaks Spanish in that class. There is no one who doesn't speak Spanish in that class....Well, many times we don't use English. That's why some...They aren't making any progress. (RQ, I1, 5)

Co-researchers reported that sheltered content teachers at Capital High encouraged students to use Spanish for academic purposes. Some teachers encouraged students to help each other in Spanish after teachers' presentations or during small group activities. Others had students translate key words or concepts into Spanish for the whole class. Although interviewees reported that translation of key words was sometimes helpful, their comments after the following sheltered mathematics class suggested that the use of Spanish was ineffective in this interchange.

> Ms. Henry: Take out a piece of paper. Write this down: Decimal. All numbers have a decimal point. How do you say "decimal" in Spanish?
> Leticia: Decimal.
> Ms. Henry: Good. You know what I'm talking about. Look on your chart. Look. Look. Look.
> Ms. Henry: Claudio, find your decimal point on the chart. Put an X through it. Samuel, turn your paper the other way. Put an X where the decimal is. (10-24-90, 2)

In this lesson, the teacher used Spanish-speaking students as resources. Samuel, however, admitted that he had never studied decimals and did not know what the word meant after it had been translated. Claudio, on the other hand, explained that he understood decimals and did not need the word translated since it was the same in Spanish and English. Both students reported that, in this case, the translation was not useful.

Ms. Henry also encouraged students to help each other in Spanish on a one-to-one basis, especially those who recently transferred into her class or those whose attendance was sporadic, both of which were common occurrences. This openness toward language created a learning environment which students told me they found helpful. There were times, however, when she wanted to be certain that students were "on task." On one occasion, for example, two students were working on an activity in Spanish. Ms. Henry stood by their desks listening, trying to understand what they were saying. She finally said, "Speak English so I can tell what you're talking about" (10-19-90, 3). Trust was extended but only so far.

Interviewees were more critical of bilingual teachers' classroom language usage polices. Bilingual teachers agreed with students' perceptions that it is more difficult for them than for monolingual teachers to encourage English usage. Mr. Chavez, the teacher of the sheltered U.S. history classes, explained: "It was my suggestion that they don't use a Spanish speaker for these classes because the students try to use Spanish. I've known most of these kids since they were freshmen" (1-16-90, 10).

Mr. Chavez sometimes helped or disciplined individuals in Spanish. When speaking to the entire class, however, he always used English. Six interviewees said that they appreciated his practice of allowing students to respond and ask questions in Spanish. Gabriel explained:

> Sometimes it's better to have a teacher who speaks Spanish...If I have a question in biology class and the teacher doesn't speak Spanish and we can't ask the question in English or if he doesn't understand us in English, the doubt remains. The doubt remains. We never get rid of our doubt. With Mr. Chavez, if I have a doubt that I didn't understand him, I will ask the question in Spanish because he understands Spanish and he'll tell me the answer. (GD, I4, 3)

Interviewees mentioned that Mr. Chavez made occasional attempts to have students answer in English. My class observations confirmed that he interrupted students who started to respond in Spanish (10-16-90, 10). Other times he accepted answers in Spanish and then had students repeat them in English (10-30-90, 11). Most often he spoke in English and students answered in Spanish. Gabriel thought he allowed this so that the flow of the discussion would not be interrupted:

> In the class when we get to a certain--when the class is in progress and if I ask a question in Spanish, it's not logical for the teacher to say, "Don't ask me in Spanish. You have to do it in English." Since the class is in progress, he answers it in English. He doesn't lose time asking us to speak English. He never speaks Spanish in class. (GD, I4, 2)

Cecilia noted, however, that this fast-paced conversational flow in Spanish sometimes made it more difficult for her to try to answer in English in this class. (12-13-90,7).

Students were very critical, however, of bilingual teachers who did not allow them to speak Spanish for academic purposes in the classroom. Bárbara phrased it this way during a lunchtime conversation:

> What makes me mad is that even the Mexican teachers--and they belong to *la raza*--don't want us to speak Spanish in class. Sometimes we have questions and can't explain them in English. They should understand. (10-16-90, 29)

Interviewees were also critical of bilingual teachers who did not allow them to speak Spanish for social purposes in the classroom. Margarita expressed her frustration one day at lunch:

> I was in Mr. Lopez' class today. He told us not to speak Spanish. I told him that we speak English during the lesson, but that there is nothing wrong with speaking Spanish among ourselves. We can't speak English all the time. (11-2-90, 11)

Mr. Lopez told me that he thought it was important for Mexican immigrants to talk to native speakers. He did not, however, discuss the rationale behind his philosophy and current practice of not allowing students to speak Spanish in his classes, even among themselves for social purposes. My very brief conversation with him left questions as to how much he thought these immigrants had to cut themselves off from their linguistic and cultural roots:

> I have had kids who made it, who went to Cal Poly. They need to get with English speakers to make it. They have to really try hard. It also depends on their socio-economic situation. (12-3-90, 15)

Interviewees reported the strongest negative reaction to Latino teachers who denigrated them or their language. Such was the case in a class when a bilingual teacher visited a sheltered history class for a current events competition with his group of primarily monolingual Americans. He alternately gave the sheltered class the team name "Mojados" ("Wetbacks") or "Nopaleros" ("Prickly Pear Eaters"). After class, Antonio said, "Why does that teacher say things like that? He shouldn't say them, especially in front of the Americans" (11-29-90, 2).

Interviewees identified a need to speak Spanish with bilingual teachers: "Speaking Spanish with the teacher...is more for identification. We identify more with the teacher when we speak our own language" (GD, I4, 3-4). There was a certain comfort level that they felt they could not achieve in English yet: "If you are the only one speaking English you feel uncomfortable. It's very comfortable in there--all in Spanish. I would like to be that comfortable in English, but we can't do it" (AN, I1, 1).

Summary of students' opinions of teachers' expectations.

Co-researchers talked about the importance of having teachers who were *buena gente*, who respected them and had high expectations. The statements of teachers at Capital High supported students' perceptions of varying expectation levels for immigrant students. Some teachers stated that LEP students were bright and had to be helped according to their individual needs. Others were convinced that LEP students were not very intelligent and that no changes in curriculum or teaching methodologies were required.

Co-researchers described differences between discipline in Mexican and American schools. They said that they could not learn without discipline in a classroom but that it was unnecessary for a teacher to be too strict.

Interviewees reported that teachers' attitude towards language, use of language, and language choice policies were influential in determining how well they understood lessons and and how comfortable they felt asking and responding to questions.

Discussion of Theme 3: Educational and Institutional Factors That Affect Students' Use and Acquisition of English

An increasingly large influx of immigrants has strained Capital High's school district which, like many in California, is struggling to organize its programs for LEP students. Co-researchers claimed to have problems learning English because of their class schedules, class content, teachers' methodologies, and teachers' expectations.

Students' concerns with inappropriate class placements support the findings of Lucas et al. (1990) which identified the necessity of providing special counseling programs for language minority students. Although the site-level language coordinator at Capital High indicated that improvement had been made at the school during the past year, interviewees' experiences indicated that institutionalized placement procedures were still based on English language proficiency, biased tracking systems, and placement tests that did not often include ongoing evaluation of academic progress.

Three co-researchers explained that they were placed in classes which they found difficult because teaching strategies did not meet the needs of language minority students. Most placement problems reported by students, however, involved classes where they were repeating coursework they had already completed in Mexico. Their frustrations were like those described by Central American refugees in a study by Suarez-Orozco (1989): "I'm not a crab; I don't want to go backwards" (p. 130). Also similar to the placement situation reported by Suarez-Orozco (1989), interviewees worried about communication problems with non-Spanish-speaking counselors at Capital High who did not understand students' backgrounds or goals.

Interviewees described many of their required and elective classes as unchallenging. Their tracked English classes and "lockstep" math classes lowered teacher expectations for all students. Interviewees' experiences followed a self-fulfilling prophecy model and are certainly not limited to second language students as shown in Pygmalion in the classroom (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968).

Although thirteen co-researchers had plans to continue their studies after high school, their access to some required classes and electives was limited by their proficiency in English. Some elective classes were used as "holding areas" for LEP students, as explained by a choral music teacher who expressed concern that her classes were being used as a place to "babysit" LEP students who had no interest in music (12-17-90, 11). Other electives were designated as inappropriate for LEP students. Co-researchers, for example, wanted to study computers. At the time of the interviews Capital High did not offer a computer class open to ESL 1 students.

Lucas et al. (1990) found that effective schools offer a variety of courses and programs for language minority students. Romero (1991) indicated the value of curriculum alignment that included the integration of ESL and other instructional programs so that LEP students would not be segregated from the mainstream. It is discriminatory for class placements to be limited by language proficiency in both required and elective classes. ESL students are legally protected from "educational dead-end or permanent track" programs as specified in the Office of Civil Rights memo issued on May 25, 1970, that was upheld by Lau v. Nichols. As indicated by Sobul (1984), however, loose coupling between national, state, and local guidelines often negates the protection offered ESL students by federal legislation.

Interviewees at all levels of English proficiency were concerned about school curriculum. One co-researcher explained that students lost interest when teachers failed to organize the curriculum around themes that helped students explore important topics systematically. Other interviewees expressed their curricular concerns in terms of their interests and needs rather than organizational issues. All students said they were tired of memorizing vocabulary lists as a way to learn English. Interviewees' concerns are supported by second language theory which states that optimal language input should be interesting and/or relevant so that learners concentrate on meaning not form (Krashen, 1981b, 1983, 1985).

As reported in Romero (1991), teachers in exemplary Special Alternative Instructional Programs (SAIPs), used whole language strategies that included thematic units. Capital High's School District has recognized the lack of coordinated themes in its ESL curriculum. Teachers and administrators met to identify themes that will be used next year to coordinate instruction at all levels. At the time that my research was conducted, their planning consisted of lists of possible activities to support these themes. No materials had been organized for classroom use. An analysis of these themes and activities is beyond the scope of this study, but initial inspection suggested that some attention has been paid to engaging students in dialogs on critical issues that include global awareness, human rights, and self esteem. Teachers explained that they hoped to motivate students to acquire language by encouraging them to make more personal and cultural connections and to examine cultural differences before conforming to arbitrary standards. These same curricular concerns were discussed by Auerbach and Burgess (1987) who warned of the hidden curriculum of beginning ESL classes.

Interviewees and my classroom observations provided some examples of lessons in which teachers tried to motivate students by connecting the curriculum to students' cultures and personal lives . Although I did not calculate the exact time spent making these connections, in no class that I observed did teachers relate 35% of classroom information to students' languages and cultures as reported by Romero (1991) in exemplary SAIPs.

As noted by Freire & Macedo (1987), language involves both the word and the world. Neither interviews nor classroom observations indicated that teachers encouraged students to make cultural and historical connections through what Freire (1987) termed "generative words" words like immigrant and prejudice that connect to their realities? In a U.S. history class, for example, "vocabulary words" for a chapter included the words immigrant and prejudice which the teacher did not use to elicit any type of student interaction. I had seen the word *mojado* (wetback) draw intense reactions from many of the students in this class, yet they were not challenged to express these feelings in English. It would have required use of abstract language, yet without a personal, and in this case social/political connection to language, students may never begin to feel an ownership of English. In a separate case, Cecilia shared her passionate views about Mexican students' need to prove that they were not inferior. Would she have been able to communicate these same feelings in English if she had been encouraged to make cultural and historical connections to the legacies of the Mexican American War?

Interviewees said that they depended on teachers to present material in ways that they could understand. They cited examples of effective and ineffective methodologies in their ESL classes, their sheltered content classes, and in their regular classes. Students at all levels said they could function more easily in classes if teachers used a variety of verbal and non-verbal cues to help them. As suggested by Krashen (1980. 1981a), effective language modification techniques included repeating, paraphrasing, and simplifying language, as well as speaking loudly, clearly, and at a reasonable rate of speed.

Interviewees discussed the importance of visual and experiential strategies, commonly called sheltered content techniques, which Romero (1991) identified as "active teaching" strategies. She found that 90% of the effective teachers in her study used visuals and manipulatives and that 75% of them used advance organizers. Lucas et al. (1990) specified that staff development in effective schools for Latino students included education in how to present lessons using a variety of teaching strategies.

Interviewees' descriptions of effective teaching strategies have implications both for teachers who cannot speak Spanish and for bilingual teachers of sheltered content classes who want to improve their students' ability to understand and use English for academic purposes (CALP). The first group has no choice but to rely on sheltered content techniques if students are to understand; the second group would have to choose to use these techniques and to establish a need to speak English.

Although all co-researchers identified effective teaching strategies, two of them argued that student motivation and effort could overcome some, if not all teacher deficiencies. While this attitude offered praise for students who managed to succeed on their own resources, by implication it also blamed the students who could not. In effect, it was a case of "victims" blaming "victims." All co-researchers' statements suggest, however, that it was easier for them to learn when teachers involved them verbally and non-verbally in the learning process through large group and small group work.

Co-researchers described large group verbal activities that included choral repetitions, oral reading, and discussions. Although the linguistic value of the first two types of exercises has been questioned (Krashen, 1982a, 1982b), jazz chants, students reading colloquial sentences or phrases with the intonation patterns of a native speaker, have been used as an effective way to give students the "feel" of a language in their mouths (Graham, 1978).

Interviews and classroom observations provided examples of large-group non-verbal participation as whole classes simultaneously followed instructions. As researched by Asher (1969), this type of participation is most helpful to second language students who may not be ready to respond orally for a variety of reasons. Following directions indicates that input has been understood without the pressure of formulating oral responses.

Thirteen interviewees indicated that they would consult classmates before going to teachers for academic help. Kagan (1986) identified this natural inclination in Latino students and used it as the rationale for developing strategies for formalized cooperative learning activities.

Interviewees described some classroom activities that involved small group work and "hands-on" learning, but these activities were more consistently reported in advanced classes. Students who could have profited equally from collaborative and experiential learning were often left to read the book and answer the questions at the end of the chapter.

Co-researchers indicated the need for more small group activities in their classes. Their opinions support one of the SAIPs study's findings that cooperative learning groups are an effective but "under-used" way to increase student participation and collaboration at the secondary level. As cited in van Broekhuizen (1991), high school teachers, however, tended to assign students to cooperative learning groups only 28.5% of the time, while their elementary school counterparts used this strategy 69.2% of the time and middle school teachers used in 50% of the time. The SAIPs study also found that student talk dominated the lessons in only 14.2% of the cases at the secondary level but at 46.1% at the elementary level and 28.5% at the middle school level. Student collaboration and participation, therefore, was found to decrease from elementary schools to high schools, based on the ways teachers structured activities.

Co-researchers reported that teachers' expectations and attitudes influenced their effort and achievements. They said they responded best to teachers who were *buena gente*, good people who respected students yet pressured them to work to high standards. They gave many examples of teachers who had supported them at Capital High. They also described the negative impact of some teachers' lack of respect and lowered standards. Only two interviewees with strong intrinsic motivation reported that they were able to were able to function academically and linguistically in a class where a teacher's expectations and respect for students were low.

High expectations were found to be components of effective programs for language minority students by Lucas et al.(1990) and van Broekhuizen (1991).

> All teachers interviewed expressed a high degree of confidence in the abilities of their students to learn and their own capacity to teach them. LEP students were not only told they could achieve, but were expected to match or supercede the achievement of their mainstream grade level peers. (van Broekhuizen, 1991)

Students' statements about teachers' attitudes and class discipline support Krashen's Socio-Affective Filter Hypothesis. Due to what they termed an affective filter, Dulay and Burt (1977) and Krashen (1981a, 1981b, 1982, 1985) theorized that students' self-confidence, motivation, attitudes and emotional states all determine whether they will be able to understand and speak the target language. Interviewees stated that class discipline problems often interfered with their comprehension and use of English. In classes that were too authoritarian, they said they were afraid to speak for fear of making a mistake. Students said it was even more difficult to communicate in English in classes that lacked discipline. The cases described by interviewees need to be considered in the context of the entire learning environment. In some instances discipline problems were caused by one or more elements that included inappropriate curriculum, class placements, or methodology. The resulting lack of order and participation in the classroom appeared the same.

Freire (1987) and Freire & Macedo (1987) distinguished between teachers' authoritarian behavior and discipline, indicating that authoritarianism inhibits learning and diminishes self-esteem. Freire (1987) indicated that teaching and learning are difficult yet joyful work that requires discipline and communication. In some cases described by interviewees, the joy and intrinsic motivation of communicating a message (Macnamara, 1973) had been removed and discipline had been replaced with tickets as extrinsic motivation.

Teachers' attitude toward language, language choice, and classroom language policies were influential in determining students' language choice in the classroom. Co-researchers said they appreciated the efforts of monolingual teachers who respected Spanish and tried to help them learn in English. Students' insistence on respect for their language support the findings of Lucas et al. (1990) and Lucas and Katz (1991).

All but two of the students' teachers at the time of the interviews were monolingual English speakers. Interviewees' statements suggested they were tolerant of and sometimes amused by monolingual teachers' experimental use of Spanish which they reported as alternately succeeded or failing to help them understand class content. To my knowledge, there has been no research that has analyzed the effects of monolingual American teachers' occasional use of Spanish.

Students reported that teachers' classroom language policies varied. They indicated that ESL teachers encouraged but did not insist on students' use of English. They reported that sheltered content teachers allowed them to work collaboratively in Spanish. My classroom observations confirmed that Spanish-speaking students rarely communicated among themselves in English for either academic or social purposes.

Lucas and Katz (1991) found that teachers and students literally did not speak the same language. They determined that teachers spoke English 96.6% of the time, but students in their study spoke English only 49.7% of the time. They attributed part of the language difference to the fact that students spent 28% of their time in small language-alike groups which encouraged academic achievement rather than use of English. Lucas and Katz found that English teachers encouraged English usage by using heterogeneous language groupings. Teachers at Capital High did not have this option in their English classes because ESL classes contained only a few non-Spanish-speakers.

Co-researchers were ambivalent about bilingual teachers' policies of Spanish language usage in the classroom. Interviewees were unanimously in favor of classes being taught in English, but they were critical of bilingual teachers who did not allow them to speak Spanish for academic purposes and even more critical of those who insisted they use English for social purposes in the classroom. Suarez-Orozco (1989) stated that there is no research to support the fact that Latino teachers are more successful than Anglo teachers with Latino students. Co-researchers indicated that they were comfortable in classes with bilingual teachers since they could both ask and answer questions at a higher academic level. Only one student said that she continued to try to respond in English in a class with a bilingual teacher.

Cummins (1980, 1983) stated that CALP increases through continued input and interaction. Interviewees reported that they received academic input in English only from teachers and that they had educational and institutional factors at their school provided them with limited need to interact in English for academic purposes. Unlike the findings of Romero (1991) students' experiences did not indicate "an overt language focus throughout the curriculum" (p.5).

Interviewees' suggestions for the improvement of language teaching and learning in their school will be presented in the following chapter.

Chapter 8

IMMIGRANT STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND TEACHING

The findings in this chapter incorporate students' ideas from interviews, informal discussions, and a final meeting with co-researchers during which the group interacted to make additional suggestions for improving English language learning and teaching. Co-researchers' opinions have been organized into four sub-themes: A) suggestions for self-improvement, B) advice to new immigrant students, C) suggestions for teachers, and D) suggestions for the school. Students' suggestions in each of the sub-themes of Theme 4 will be preceded by an outline of the categories and properties, and, in some cases, sub-properties relating to the sub-theme. Immediately following students' suggestions in each sub-theme is a short statement of the educational implications of their opinions.

Following is an outline of the findings presented in Theme 4 (Figure 13).

Figure 13. Theme 4: Immigrant students' suggestions for the improvement of English language acquisition and teaching.

A. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT

1. Students need to hear and use more English
    a. Students need to work harder in class
    b. Students need to use English outside of class

2. Students need to change classes
    a. Students should take academically challenging classes
    b. Students should be in more classes with English speakers
3. Students need to take ESL and sheltered content classes

B. INTERVIEWEES' ADVICE TO NEW IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

1. New immigrant students need *ganas* and effort
    a. New immigrant students should prove themselves as Mexicans
    b. New immigrant students should study hard and try to communicate
    c. New immigrant students should not become easily discouraged
2. New immigrant students need to find many different ways to learn English
    a. New immigrant students should take ESL classes
    b. New immigrant students should make friends and practice English
    c. New immigrant students should "collect" new words: listen/watch/ask/read/write
    d. New immigrant students should participate in school activities

C. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. Teachers/schools should organize curriculum around themes that are important and interesting: Teachers should listen to students' suggestions about what they need and want to study
2. Teachers should use many teaching methods
    a. Teachers should encourage students to investigate, experiment, and discuss
    b. Teachers should use a variety of strategies and materials so that students understand lessons and do not get bored
    c. Teachers should provide sufficient time for students' work
3. Teachers' should use English most of the time
    a. All teachers should speak English in classes
        i. Teachers should simplify language and speak slowly
        ii. Teachers should explain *and* model English usage
    b. Content teachers should allow/encourage students to use Spanish to ensure conceptual understanding
    c. Content teachers should enable students to use English for academic purposes
4. Teachers should have high expectations for all students
    a. Teachers should "pressure" students to use English
    b. Teachers should not pace class to those who do not work
    c. Teachers should maintain a disciplined, not strict, learning environment

D. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SCHOOL

1. Schools should provide academic support
    a. Schools should provide appropriate placement in classes
    b. Schools should provide verification of linguistic and academic progress
2. Schools should provide material support
    a. Students need texts they can take home from each class
    b. Teachers need equipment, materials to make lessons clearer
3. Schools should provide extracurricular support
    a. Schools should assure equal access to existing extracurricular activities
    b. Schools should consult with students in formation of new activities
4. Schools should provide information about scholarships
5. Schools should provide open channels of communication for all students

Suggestions for Self-Improvement

A. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT

1. Students need to hear and use more English
    a. Students need to work harder in class
    b. Students need to use English outside of class
2. Students need to change classes
    a. Students should take academically challenging classes
    b. Students should be in more classes with English speakers
3. Students need to take ESL and sheltered content classes

Co-researchers suggestions for self-improvement included the need to listen to and use and more English in and out of class, as well as the need to change class placements for academic or linguistic reasons. Some students said they needed the continued support of ESL and sheltered content classes. One interviewee stated that he was satisfied with his own efforts and that his inability to make faster progress was due to teachers and the school.

Students Need to Hear and Use More English

Interviewees at all levels said they could be trying harder. All students said they needed not only to learn more words but how to put them together, how to use them. They said that to do this they needed to pay more attention to English both in and out of class.

> I need to learn more words and learn how to put them together to be able to ask things. (GM, I2, 7)
>
> I need to pay more attention to things so I can learn the words. (YA, I2, 6)

Educational Implications

Educators cannot control opportunities for linguistic interactions in English outside of school. They can, however, restructure their lecture-oriented classrooms so that second language students can understand and use English to communicate for both social and academic purposes. The emphasis in these interactions should not be on speed or accuracy but on communication so that students can build their language proficiency and self-confidence (Cummins, 1989; Heald-Taylor, 1989; Krashen, 1981a, 1981b, 1982a; Swain, 1985; Wong-Fillmore, 1985a, 1985b).

The problem of teacher-dominated classrooms is not limited to those containing second language students. In the case of language minority students, however, this situation is detrimental to students' language development as well as their cognitive growth. Teachers' and classmates' English language input is vital, but linguistic proficiency is also dependent on opportunities for interaction (Swain, 1985; Wong-Fillmore, 1985a, 1985b). All classes, including content area classes, should have English language development as a goal while using students' first languages as a respected resources (Romero, 1991).

Findings from this study suggest that it is very difficult to promote English interactions among speakers of Spanish. Co-researchers insisted that teachers need to apply "pressure" for them to use English in situations where everyone can speak without fear of ridicule. Classroom observations showed that this only occurs in small-group activities that are highly structured and geared to students' level of language proficiency.

Students Need to Change Classes

Eight interviewees said they wanted to take more academically challenging classes. Six specified that their mathematics classes were too easy for them.

Most co-researchers wanted to change classes for linguistic reasons. Two said they were satisfied with opportunities for English interactions with English-only (EO) students in their classes; three said they were more comfortable speaking English with Spanish-speaking friends or other non-Spanish-speaking immigrants, nine said they would rather be in more classes with English-Only students. Most interviewees, therefore, agreed with Gabriel who said he wanted to speak English with those who could "correct" him (GD, I1, 5-6). Claudio explained why he wanted to be in classes with monolingual Americans.

> In school maybe I would like it better to be in classrooms, in my classes only with people who speak English because if you have classmates who speak English you have to force yourself to speak English. What's important is to be able to speak, to communicate with them, with those people, with your classmates. What good does it do us? That's all we're doing now in English is speaking Spanish. (CD, I1, 7)

Educational Implications

The tension between students' rights to both linguistic and cognitive development is not one that is easily resolved in either bilingual or "English-only" programs. Although national legislation established the fact that students have a right to be educated while they are learning English, states, counties, districts, schools, and individual teachers all determine how federal policy is implemented (Sobul, 1984).

Motivated Mexican immigrants who have completed the six years of education required for the *primaria* (elementary school), the nine years of education required for the *secundaria* (junior high school), or the twelve years of education required for the *preparatoria* (high school) are theoretically in a strong position to both learn English and make academic progress in an "English-only" American high school. In theory, they can rely on their Common Underlying Proficiency (Cummins, 1979, 1981) to build on cognitive skills and knowledge learned in their first language. In theory, American schools provide them with access to speakers of English who can provide comprehensible input and opportunities for interactions (Wong-Fillmore, 1985a).

Findings from this study show that in at least one school, student realities do not match this theoretical promise for educated and motivated Mexican adolescents. For co-researchers, English language input was teacher-dominated and insufficiently modified in many classes. Their experiences suggest that they survived in a Spanish-speaking school *barrio* until their third year in their ESL program. They had very limited opportunities to use English for either academic or social purposes and were often placed in classes that were well below their academic level attained in Spanish.

As previously stated, teachers must provide comprehensible input and the opportunities for students to communicate in English. Schools must provide the programmatic means for students to progress academically. If these conditions are not met, it is possible that motivated and well educated students like those in this study would make as much, and possibly more, linguistic and academic progress in mainstreamed classes.

Students Need to Take ESL and Sheltered Content Classes

All co-researchers stated that some of their ESL and sheltered content classes had been helpful. Of the ten students still in ESL classes, seven said they needed the continued support of these classes. Three said they felt a remedial stigma attached to them and were anxious to get into "regular" classes.

Educational Implications

Krashen (1980, 1981b) maintained that the classroom may be the best place for adults to acquire a second language up to the intermediate level because it is not always easy to get comprehensible input in everyday situations. Mainstream "real world" classes where lecture is the sole means of instruction are unlikely to promote either the linguistic or cognitive development of ESL students.

Teachers and schools must actively promote the worth of ESL students as aspiring bilinguals. The "remedial" image of ESL and sheltered content classes, as experienced by some co-researchers in this study, must be eliminated. Exemplary Special Alternative Instructional Programs (SAIPs), as reported by Tikunoff & Ward (1991), all promoted pride in bilingual abilities.

Advice for New Immigrant Students

B. INTERVIEWEES' ADVICE TO NEW IMMIGRANT STUDENTS

1. New immigrant students need *ganas* and effort
    a. New immigrant students should prove themselves as Mexicans
    b. New immigrant students should not become easily discouraged
2. New immigrant students need to find many different ways to learn English
    a. New immigrant students should take ESL classes
    b. New immigrant students should make friends and practice English
    c. New immigrant students should "collect" new words: listen/watch/ask/read/write
    d. New immigrant students should participate in school activities

Co-researchers discussed students' attitude and effort as being the most important ingredients in the success of second language students. They said that new immigrants from Mexico needed a strong desire, *ganas,* to prove themselves, to study hard, and to communicate. They explained they would warn the students not to become easily discouraged because language comes slowly. They also suggested some practical ways for students to use and acquire English.

New Immigrant Students Need *Ganas* and Effort

Cecilia was very forceful in expressing her advice to new students:

> The truth is *ganas*, wanting to study and to show everyone that being Mexican does not mean we can't do it. A lot of people think that Mexicans don't know anything, but we can do it. We can show the world that we are better if we try...If you want to, you can do things. (CM, I2, 6).

Co-researchers were emphatic, however, in their belief that *ganas* alone are not enough. As explained by Yolanda: "All of them would like to speak English, but a lot of them don't pay attention. They don't put any effort into it" (YA, I1, 10). Cecilia agreed saying, " I have friends who speak only Spanish and who don't want to study. A lot of them come here like that." (CM, I2, 6).

Gabriel explained that progress in English came slowly :

> Gabriel: If someone doesn't know English, I think that English is learned with time. You learn little by little until you know it.
> Researcher: Does little by little mean that you only have to wait for it to happen?
> Gabriel: [interrupting] No, no, no.
> Researcher: Like for something supernatural to happen. [laughter]
> Gabriel: [laughter] ...You already heard how I'm learning, and that's why I said little by little because I don't know if I'm learning what I need to know. From each thing that they teach us, maybe little by little something will stay with us. Being able to speak English will not come quickly.
> Researcher: Do you think it's possible to learn faster than you're learning?
> Gabriel: I don't know why not. I think so. (GD, I2, 7)

Educational Implications

Findings from this study suggest that Mexican immigrants relied heavily on the the advice and assistance of their classmates, some of which were more helpful than others in helping them make linguistic and academic progress.

Student support groups can play an important role in helping Mexican students maintain both the *ganas* and effort they need to succeed in an American high school. With the guidance of committed faculty members, these groups can assure students of a reliable and caring way to keep in touch with both their Mexican roots and opportunities within their new American setting.

Different types of formal and informal support groups were reported in Matute-Bianchi (1986), Suarez-Orozco (1989), Lucas et al. (1990), and Tikunoff and Ward (1991). Their success depended on how autonomously students functioned within their individual settings and how much importance administrators and teachers placed on acknowledging student voices.

New Immigrant Students Need to Find Many Ways to Learn English

Co-researchers said that they would tell new immigrants to use every means at their disposal to learn more English. These included taking ESL classes; making new friends and practicing English; "collecting" new words wherever they went; and participating in extracurricular activities at school.

All co-researchers agreed that new immigrants should have classroom instruction in English as a second language. Although they were unhappy with some of the ESL classes they had taken, all of them talked about at least one of their teachers who had successfully helped them to learn English. They talked about their classes as a place to learn vocabulary and rules and to read and write, rather than to speak English. They said that this had helped them, but that they would also like to have more of an opportunity to communicate in English. Antonio described the benefits of his formal instruction in this way: "In ESL, well, they teach you the rules for how you should write or how you should read..." (AN, I2, 10).

Interviewees were aware that their language acquisition process was not limited to the classroom and that students had to be aware of English wherever they went. Genoveva simply said she would help a new immigrant "collect new words" (GM, I2, 9), but Gabriel gave more specific advice after he had thought carefully about how he had learned language during the one and one-half years he had been in the U.S.. His advice incorporates the ideas of several other interviewees:

> Learn everything. Watch the teacher, her movements, and listen to everything the teacher explains, how to do it. Pay more attention. Ask if you don't understand an important word. There are words that are used often, that you hear a lot...Ask what those words mean. And in awhile you will find another one that you don't understand. Little by little you will begin to make sentences, to ask about what you don't understand. (GD, I4, 10)

Bárbara suggested that newcomers watch TV and read in English. Antonio said that writing helped him remember words:

> When I first started, I really had to think about and write some words many times before I could remember them and know how to write them. Afterwards, only one time, you hear it one or two times and you remember it. You can more or less use the sound to guide you in knowing how to write it. You have to really want to study. (AN, I2, 10)

Adriana said there was no substitute for speaking English, especially with those who do not speak Spanish. In her opinion, immigrant friends from non-Spanish-speaking countries were the easiest persons to talk to. She offered this advice to a new Mexican immigrant:

> You should really want to do well in your classes. You should try to speak it, to learn English, to keep using it so that it will "stick" faster--and you will be able to communicate faster with people who don't speak her language. I think [you have to speak] with people who speak English, who don't speak the same language you do. That's what I think. (AE, I2, 13)

All three of the interviewees who were involved in extracurricular activities stressed the linguistic and social benefits they had gotten from these experiences. They said they would highly recommend this type of involvement to their new *compañeros* from Mexico.

Margarita who worked in the school's ROP program said that too many of her friends were unwilling to try new things.

> My friends tell me, "Why should I give them my time for nothing?" I tell them, "It's not for nothing. I learned how to do a job. I learned more English. (12-3-90, 18-19)

All of the co-researchers said that they were very willing to spend time helping newer immigrants learn about classes and the school.

Educational Implications

As discussed above, student support groups would provide forums for the sharing of the practical suggestions made by interviewees, thereby validating the experiences of the older group and easing the anxieties of the newer group. Formal and informal support networks should continue even after students are no longer in ESL classes.

Suggestions for Teachers

C. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. Teachers/schools should organize curriculum around themes that are important and interesting: Teachers should listen to students' suggestions about what they need and want to study
2. Teachers should use many teaching methods
    a. Teachers should encourage students to investigate, experiment, and discuss
    b. Teachers should use a variety of strategies and materials so that students understand lessons and do not get bored
    c. Teachers should provide sufficient time for students' work
3. Teachers' should use English most of the time
    a. All teachers should speak English in classes
        i. Teachers should simplify language and speak slowly
        ii. Teachers should explain *and* model English usage
    b. Content teachers should allow/encourage students to use Spanish to ensure conceptual understanding
    c. Content teachers should enable students to use English for academic purposes
4. Teachers should have high expectations for all students
    a. Teachers should "pressure" students to use English
    b. Teachers should not pace class to those who do not work
    c. Teachers should maintain a disciplined, not strict, learning environment

Three of the co-researchers were hesitant during their interviews about making suggestions for the improvement of teachers' strategies. Others made comments about classroom-based issues. Their suggestions were concerned with curriculum, classroom methodology, language choice in the classroom, and teachers' expectations for students.

ESL Teachers Should Establish a Curriculum That Is Important and Interesting

Interviewees said that ESL classes should involve students in meaningful and interesting topics of conversation. They suggested that classes should be organized around central themes which encouraged students to understand and participate. Students indicated that they would like to be able to suggest topics to be studied, including those that connect to their culture.

Educational Implications

As indicated by Gabriel, "There is more to doing work than understanding it" (GD, I3, 3). Whole Language theory (Goodman, 1986) stressed that learning must be based on students' experiences and interests so that students can actively construct their knowledge.

Teachers must know their students backgrounds and needs so that the curriculum can be built and adjusted with them and for them.

Teachers Should Use Many Teaching Methods

Co-researchers said they wanted teachers to use a variety of strategies and materials so that they could understand lessons and not get bored. They specifically indicated that they wanted to be actively involved in learning by investigating, experimenting, and discussing. They said that teachers needed to be patient and give them enough time to complete projects successfully.

Educational Implications

As suggested in Lucas et al. (1990), staff development in schools with multilingual populations must be explicitly designed to help teachers and other staff serve language minority students more effectively. As described in Tikunoff and Ward (1991) this includes modifying both the organization and the delivery of instruction. Activities suggested by interviewees require organizational changes such as grouping patterns which encourage experiential learning that includes investigating, experimenting, and discussing. Changes in delivery of instruction include language modification and support strategies suggested by Krashen (1980). The pacing of lessons to students' level of language proficiency is another key component of these changes.

Modifications in both organization and delivery require that teachers be educated in second language theory and instruction and that they be given preparation time to implement effective strategies. Only persons knowledgeable in second language acquisition theory and methods should be responsible for teaching English to second language students. There is a supplemental authorization available but no credential necessary to be an ESL teacher in California. Schools cannot ask science teachers to teach history, but teachers from other disciplines often are "drafted" or volunteer to fill needed positions in schools with growing LEP enrollments. Just as often, long-term substitute teachers, on emergency teaching credentials, are hired to work with ESL students.

The turn-over rate for ESL teachers at Capital High was large. During the semester that I worked at Capital High, three of the seven ESL staff members had little or no education or experience in teaching English to immigrant students. Two of these three were teaching on emergency teaching credentials and had never taught ESL before. I had the following conversation with one of these long-term substitute teachers:

> Substitute Teacher: I can imagine what you are going to write in your dissertation about this class. You'll probably suggest that they don't hire long-term s subs with no experience or training in ESL.
> Researcher: Is that an unreasonable suggestion?
> Substitute Teacher: No, it's probably a good idea. (11-29-90, 12)

Some teachers refuse to address issues involved in teaching LEP students. Successful teachers of language minority students deserve to have their efforts validated by the recognition of peers and administrators. Support for sheltered content techniques as well as effective inter-cultural communication methods need to be maintained on a collegial, systematic, continuous basis through professional development.

Teachers Should Use English Most of the Time

Co-researchers said they wanted their classes to be taught in English because they thought they would make faster progress that way. I occasionally played the devil's advocate, asking if they would not understand their coursework much better if some classes were taught in Spanish. The consistent response was that they wanted to hear teachers speak English even if it was harder for them to understand.

Interviewees said they would ask teachers, however, to speak English slowly and in ways that students could understand. They said they wanted teachers not only to speak English but to explain what words mean and how they were used. They said they were tired of vocabulary lists which involved memorization but no practice using the words.

Several interviewees stated that they wanted bilingual teachers to allow them to ask questions in Spanish so that they would not have to leave the classrooms with their questions unanswered when they did not know how to phrase them in English.

Educational Implications

As specified by Romero (1991) English language development is a component of all classes in successful programs for LEP students. The goal of both ESL and content classes must be to help students acquire English. This is impossible without comprehensible input in English and opportunities for interaction (Swain, 1985; Wong-Fillmore, 1985a, 1985b). Vocabulary lists involve conscious learning of words out of context, and as such, will not become part of students' acquired vocabulary. Teachers need to repeat these words many times in context and encourage students to use them to communicate in oral and written forms.

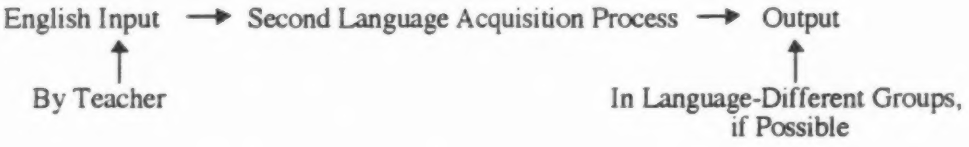
Research has shown that Latino students' use of Spanish for academic purposes is a natural and cognitively beneficial part of content classes (Lucas & Katz, 1991). Findings from this study show that students' first language can be instrumental in helping students achieve academically in content classes through cooperative work with other Spanish-speaking students. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency develops with practice. Students who have been given appropriate input in English should be allowed to solidify their conceptual understanding in their first language. With monolingual teachers, this means that students should be allowed to work in language-alike groups. With bilingual teachers, students should also work in language-alike groups with teachers acting as a resource in students' first language, if possible. Students must be then challenged to express themselves academically in English in oral and written forms. Interviewees' comments and classroom observations suggest that this last step is often omitted in favor of multiple choice tests which check basic academic comprehension but do not increase students' oral or written proficiency in English.

Research suggests that the language acquisition process is easier in ESL classes when the comprehensible input is context- embedded and cognitively undemanding. Both monolingual and bilingual teachers should give comprehensible input in English in ESL classes. Both monolingual and bilingual teachers should stress the importance of communicating in English in ESL classes and should place students in language-different groups whenever possible.

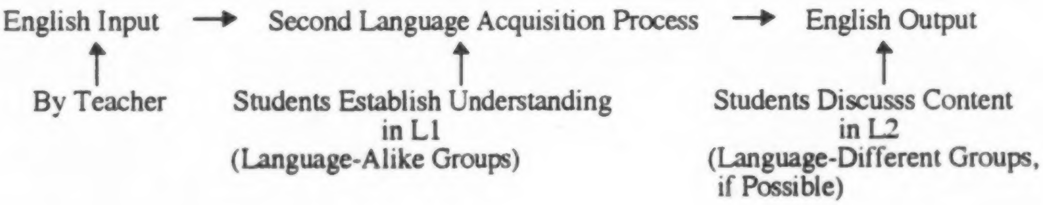
Monolingual and bilingual teachers face different challenges when teaching academic classes to language minority students in English-only high school programs. Based on suggestions made by interviewees, Figure 14 show possible sequences for instructional lessons in both ESL and content classes for monolingual and bilingual teachers.

Figure 14. The roles of first and second language input in second language acquisition in ESL and academic classes. (Adapted from Krashen, 1982a.)

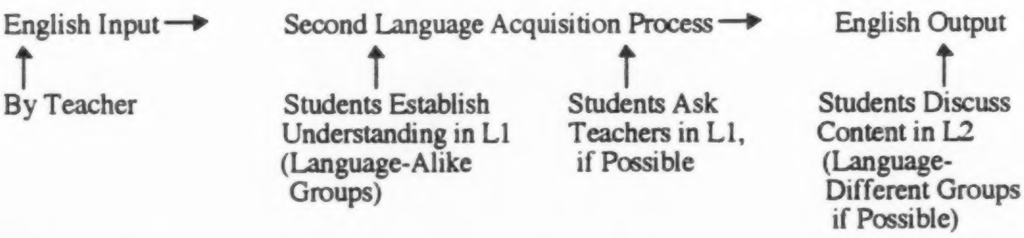
A) **ESL Classes: Monolingual and Bilingual Teachers.**


English Input
Second Language Acquisition Process
Output
By Teacher
In Language-Different Groups, if Possible

B) **Academic Classes: Monolingual Teachers**


English Input
Second Language Acquisition Process
English Output
By Teacher
Students Establish Understanding in L1 (Language-Alike Groups)
Students Discusss Content in L2 (Language-Different Groups, if Possible)

C) **Academic Classes: Bilingual Teachers (In English-Only Programs)**


English Input
Second Language Acquisition Process
English Output
By Teacher
Students Establish Understanding in L1 (Language-Alike Groups)
Students Ask Teachers in L1, if Possible
Students Discuss Content in L2 (Language-Different Groups if Possible)

Teachers Should Have High Expectations for All Students

Co-researchers agreed that teachers need high linguistic, academic, and behavioral expectations for all students. Interviewees stated that those expectations should include a certain "pressure" to use English in class. Gabriel explained it in this way:

> I feel that what is lacking here is pressure...I don't know...not like a requirement but like they should pressure us...like at my job I'm pressured because there if they talk to me about something I don't know, I have to know. That's when I try the hardest to learn what they're telling me, what they're explaining so that next time I will have already asked the questions. It's not like that here because if you learn it, you learn it, if not...(GC I1, 7)

Gabriel thought that some of his classmates were responsible for teachers lowering their standards and pacing classes to students who choose not to work:

> Try to explain to teachers that we are being held back by some students who don't understand. If only everyone understood, if everyone were the same--I don't know. I compare it to Mexico. There you have to learn because you're at school. There, all of the students go to school to study. They don't go to play. I think that American students come here to study. Some of them come to play, but others come to study. So in Mexico, it's the same thing. Teachers say, "You have to learn." And they learn. But here, I don't think that my *compañeros* want to study. They take classes so that they don't have to stay home all morning. I don't know. It's because of them that we're not making progress...It's because we're getting the wrong kind of pressure. There [in Mexico] we have to learn. (GD, I2, 8)

As previously mentioned, this attitude of some interviewees toward their classmates could be another case of blaming the victims who may be trying their best and feeling discouraged over their lack of progress in the educational system. It suggests in some cases, however, that the lack of progress by some students had a "ripple effect" on classmates who resented them and then eventually internalized the class' failure to make progress.

Five co-researchers were adamant in their statements that students should not pass courses unless they study. Gabriel's opinion was typical:

> [In Mexico] if they don't learn, they are held back, If you don't learn, you stay in the first year. And if you don't learn the next year, you stay there again. That continues until you learn. You pass if you learn. And if you don't learn the next y year, you are held back, held back, held back--until you learn. I've noticed that many classmates who aren't learning just keep moving with us. And it's the same

> thing all over again. They don't learn from the beginning and someone who is a little farther ahead is held back. If someone is learning and someone else isn't , I don't know why we all have to suffer because of them. (GD, I2, 8)

Discipline was discussed as a key factor in maintaining high expectations. Students asked teachers to respect them and to maintain discipline without strict control in the classroom.

Educational Implications

Lucas et al. (1990) found that teachers in effective schools had high expectations for second language students, sometimes higher than for their monolingual students. Co-researchers in this study stated that many of their teachers seemed to have low linguistic, academic, and behavioral expectations. Findings suggest that if input is comprehensible and activities are appropriately designed, students' welcome being "pressured" to use English for both social and academic purposes in a positive learning environment.

Suarez-Orozco (1989) noted that Mexican students do not respond well to what they perceive as lowered discipline standards in American schools. Students in this study described discipline standards at Capital High as lower than they had experienced in their private *secundarias* (junior high schools) but higher than in their public *secundarias*. In support of Freire's ideas (1987), they said that discipline should be based on respect and that discipline, not authoritarianism, established a learning environment where they could understand and speak English.

Suggestions for the School

D. STUDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR THE SCHOOL

1. Schools should provide academic support
    a. Schools should provide appropriate placement in classes
    b. Schools should provide verification of linguistic and academic progress
2. Schools should provide material support
    a. Students need texts they can take home from each class
    b. Teachers need equipment, materials to make lessons clearer
3. Schools should provide extracurricular support

   - a. Schools should assure equal access to existing extracurricular activities
   - b. Schools should consult with students in formation of new activities
4. Schools should provide information about scholarships
5. Schools should provide open channels of communication for all students

At the final group meeting, co-researchers became very vocal about suggesting ways that the school could help them learn English better. I placed their comments into five categories: academic support, material support, extracurricular support, economic support, and channels of communication open to all students.

Schools Should Provide Academic Support

The different types of academic support discussed by interviewees included class placement that acknowledged their academic backgrounds. Students suggested that initial testing for math classes was often inaccurate and that achievement in these classes would be a better gauge. They said they would like the school to monitor their progress and be willing to change their schedules when appropriate. They indicated that these changes were made occasionally but not consistently.

Interviewees' also said they would like to have access to classes of their choice earlier than currently available. They were especially interested in computer classes.

Educational Implications

Co-researchers' suggestions are mentioned among the factors involved in creating and maintaining exemplary Special Alternative Instructional Programs (SAIPs) (Tikunoff & Ward, 1991). According to this report comprehensive English language development includes frequent monitoring of language performance and academic achievement in current classes.

Faced with high transiency rates among language minority students, placement, monitoring, and assessment issues become logistical quagmires which can only be resolved through individualized attention by school staff. Large numbers of Mexican students discouraged the recognition of individual needs. Some teachers at Capital High knew their students and monitored their progress; lucky ones were singled out for special attention. Additional support staff would be needed to provide counseling and systematic language testing at regular intervals.

Schools should provide material support

Co-researchers indicated that the school should provide more material support in the form of books and audio-visual aids. Although they could take some textbooks home, in most classes they had to complete all reading and writing assignments in class under time pressures that they found difficult. Interviewees also suggested that the school provide all of their teachers with audio-visual aids such as those that made it much easier for them to understand lessons in some of their classes.

Educational Implications

Without presuming to understand the budgetary constraints of any school, there are at least two sound educational reasons for providing textbooks for LEP students' personal use. First, they are much more efficient readers and writers when working without time limits that raise their socio-affective filters. Second, class time is better spent involving students in learning activities and oral interchanges. Wong-Fillmore (1985a, 1985b) discussed the importance of having opportunities to hear and speak the target language. As determined in this study, teachers are the only consistent source of English for some Mexican immigrant students.

Once again, budgetary considerations aside, research has shown that audio-visual and manipulative aids make learning easier and more enjoyable for all students. For LEP students, however, they often make the difference between understanding and not understanding a lesson. With visual and/or experiential input, students can more easily learn difficult concepts in English (Cummins, 1981). Teachers need financial support to produce or purchase classroom teaching aids.

Schools should provide extracurricular support

Extracurricular activities, including journalism, clubs, sports, and cheerleading, were emotional issues for all co-researchers. Students wanted to be on the staff of the school newspaper which they claimed was open only to students who wrote English well. They asked why they could not write articles in Spanish or have someone help them with English. Interviewees indicated that they knew nothing about clubs on campus, with the exception of the Spanish Club which had sent each of them an invitation just prior to our final meeting. They said they would be very interested both in clubs for Latinos and in clubs where they could make American friends. Participants of both sexes said that access to sports teams was easier than girls' access to cheerleading. Students said that they felt very left out of extracurricular activities on campus.

Educational Implications

Second language programs have to be considered in the context of the school community. Language minority students are "ghetto-ized" if they do not have access to school activities open to monolingual American students. Not only are they deprived of interactions in English, but they are given the message that their language is not good enough to be used, for example, in the school newspaper. The results are identical if the students are eligible to join these organizations but have no way of finding out about them.

Effective programs for language-minority students value the students' languages and cultures (Lucas et al., 1990) both in classes and extracurricular activities. Ideally, Spanish classes should be offered at beginning levels through advanced levels so that students who have been educated in Mexico will improve their first language skills and not just repeat material they have already been taught.Cummins' (1979) threshold hypothesis states that there are positive cognitive benefits to bilingualism only if the speaker reaches a certain level of proficiency in both languages. As adolescents who are literate in Spanish, co-researchers must at least maintain their Spanish language skills while becoming proficient in English if they are to achieve the cognitive benefits of bilingualism.

There are equally important cultural and social reasons for maintaining their first language. Pride in Spanish language and literature boosts self-esteem in a foreign land. Critical reading of Chicano literature, for example, could bridge the harsh misunderstandings that co-researchers described between recent immigrants and Mexican Americans. Perhaps MECHA, *Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán*, a Chicano club, could also work toward this goal.

Mexican immigrants' interest in organizations like the Spanish Club also holds promise. At the final meeting with teachers and administrators, plans for an ESL club were discussed for next year. Language minority students' need to connect linguistically and culturally to an American campus must be met.

Schools Should Provide Information About Available Scholarships

Co-researchers said they needed the school's help in getting economic support, especially in finding scholarships to continue their studies. They stated that they did not know where to go for information.

Educational Implications

Two co-researchers explained that they had requested counseling about colleges and scholarships and were meeting privately or in groups with counselors at Capital High. Eleven interviewees did not know about the availability of these services. Lucas et al.

(1990) indicated that effective schools have counseling programs that give special attention to language-minority students. Systematic group counseling on colleges and scholarships would provide viable options for all juniors and seniors. Eleven of fourteen co-researchers were juniors or seniors.

Schools Should Provide Open Channels of Communication for All Students, Regardless of Linguistic or Cultural Backgrounds

Interviewees' overwhelming concern at the school level was that they lacked open channels of communication. They did not know where to go to find out information or make suggestions. They did not feel as if the school valued their opinions. They felt that this situation was not the same for students of other linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

Educational Implications

Good intentions of administrators, teachers, counselors, and staff are vital to the linguistic and academic success of second language students, but good intentions are not enough. The bureaucracy of a large high school inhibits communication that language minority students need if they are to move from their current peripheral position. The school is a microcosm of American society and one of its many institutions which keeps Mexican students and their parents on the fringes of economic and social opportunities. If students and their families cannot bridge linguistic and cultural gaps at school, will they be able to do so in their communities? If students and their families cannot bridge linguistic and cultural gaps in their communities, will they be able to do so at school?

Chapter 9

CONCLUSION: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS STUDY

Summary

The uniqueness of this study was its reliance on Mexican immigrant students' voices to present and analyze the complexities of the language acquisition process in an English-only secondary school setting. This research provided evidence that the most credible source for understanding students' use and acquisition of English are students' perceptions in the context of their own school lives.

Current second language theories (Krashen, 1980, 1981a, 1981b, 1982a, 1982b, 1985; Krashen, Scarcella, & Long, 1982; Swain, 1985; and Wong-Fillmore, 1985a, 1985b) and bilingual cognitive development theories (Cummins, 1979, 1980, 1983, 1989; Lambert & Tucker, 1972) had not previously been examined through the linguistic and cultural "lenses" of recent Mexican adolescent immigrants. Characteristics established for "effective/exemplary" programs for learners of English as a second language (Lucas et al., 1990; Tikunoff, W. et al., 1991) had not been examined through the lens of language minority students' experiences. Since co-researchers' opinions of their own language acquisition often involved status issues in inter-group communication patterns, this study's findings also added to the grounded theory of general cultural/ecological research conducted in high schools which to date has analyzed students' motivation and achievement rather than language acquisition (Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Suarez-Orozco, 1987, 1989).

According to the model proposed by Wong-Fillmore (1985a), three components are necessary for second language acquisition to occur: 1) motivated learners; 2) speakers of the target language who are accessible and willing to make themselves understood; and 3) interactions between learners and speakers that take place frequently enough for acquisition to take place.

The major themes that emerged from this study related to one or more of these components. Students discussed themselves as language learners, their current use of English, the educational and institutional factors that affected the use and acquisition of English, as well as their suggestions for the improvement of second language acquisition and teaching.

Mexican participants in this study were chosen as those who would have the greatest likelihood of success in an American school. Their teachers recommended them as being motivated, and they were all literate in Spanish, having completed at least six years of schooling in Mexico. Most of them had been educated through the eighth grade before coming to the United States.

Interviews and participant observations provided continuing evidence of students' motivation and academic backgrounds which made their descriptions of linguistic and cultural problems even more noteworthy. If these types of problems are being experienced by those considered most likely to succeed, what are the less motivated and educated Mexican immigrants' possibilities for success in the same educational setting?

The following brief summary of major findings apply to the fourteen co-researchers in this study:

The Learners

- Personal motivation for learning English was based on both educational and financial goals that became increasingly rooted in reality: "It's not what I want to be; it's what I can be" (GD, 5-16-91, 1). Families valued education and English, but their need for students' financial assistance sometimes interfered with the language-learning and general educational process.

- *Students' motivation became increasingly "fragile"* and their efforts decreased as they perceived insufficient progress in listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiencies. Their confidence level was undermined by their limited number of successful language experiences with speed mentioned as a major consideration in all four skill areas.
- Students' educational backgrounds in Spanish aided their comprehension in academic classes. Students felt, however, that they could not express themselves well in either oral or written form in English.
- Students depended on teachers to use a variety of visual cues to help them understand oral messages. Students expected teachers to modify their speech for non-native speakers of English.
- Of all English-learning strategies, students' relied mainly on personal help from Spanish-speaking classmates in school and younger family members at home.

The Learners' Use of English

- The large number of Spanish speakers in the area around Capital High made school the most reliable source of English speakers available to co-researchers. Access to English speakers was limited in most community and home settings but more common in work settings.
- The large number of Spanish speakers at Capital High affected the frequency of interviewees' English interactions with non-native speakers, as well as their access to monolingual speakers of English. Spanish-speaking immigrants seldom chose to speak English among themselves for either academic or social purposes.
- Spanish-speaking immigrants had few contacts with Mexican Americans who often ostracized them.

- English conversations with non-Spanish-speaking immigrants were most often conducted for social purposes. They were limited more by cultural than linguistic constraints.

- Only advanced ESL and "post-ESL" students had access to monolingual Americans in their academic classes. Although some successful linguistic interactions occurred, teaching methodologies and ethnic grouping patterns often limited language contacts even when Anglos and other ethnic groups were in classes together.

- Teachers provided the most consistent source of English input. Linguistic interactions with teachers were generally limited to a few students in large-group settings.

- Most co-researchers were not involved in extracurricular activities which three interviewees discussed as providing valuable access to English speakers. Most co-researchers did not know about extracurricular activities, were not interested in those available, or thought that participation was limited by English proficiency.

Educational and Institutional Factors That Affect the Use and Acquisition of English

- Students were better able to use and acquire English in classes that were appropriate for their linguistic and academic needs. Placements in unchallenging classes affected students' motivation and self-esteem and undermined their future educational goals.

- Students were better able to use and acquire English in classes where the curriculum was important, interesting and in some way connected to their personal and cultural realities.

- Teachers' methodologies did little to encourage use of English in many ESL and content area classes. Linguistic input in ESL and sheltered content classes was usually more comprehensible than in regular content classes. Content classes like physical education, art, typing, and science labs that taught skills through demonstration were among the easiest to understand. They did not, however, often involve students in any type of linguistic interactions in English. Students did not often experience the need to communicate without the anxiety produced by an emphasis on speed or accuracy.

- Teachers' respect for students and their languages, insistence on high academic and classroom discipline standards, and teaching skills are more important to students' success than teachers' bilingual proficiency.

Students' Suggestions for Improving English Language Acquisition and Teaching

- Students need to actively look for ways to use English in and out of class.
- Students need to change classes until they are placed in those in that are academically and linguistically appropriate.
- Students need the support of ESL and sheltered content classes without the remedial stigma that is often attached to them.
- Students need to take pride in their Mexican heritage and to maintain their motivation and effort when faced with linguistic and cultural challenges.
- Teachers should organize curriculum around themes that are important and interesting.
- Teachers should use a variety of teaching methods and materials to enable students to understand and participate in lessons.
- Teachers should use English most of the time in class.
- Teachers should have high academic and behavioral expectations for all students.
- Schools should provide students with the academic means to achieve their goals.
- Schools should provide students and teachers with necessary educational materials and books.

- Schools should provide equal access to extracurricular activities and should involve students in the establishment of additional activities to meet their social, academic, and linguistic needs.
- Schools should provide special counseling services about educational opportunities and financial assistance available to language minority students.
- Schools should provide open channels of communication for all students.

The Role of English in an "English-Only" High School

English language usage is only part of the complex puzzle to be examined in determining how Mexican immigrant students acquire English in an English-only American high school. As stated in Lucas & Katz (1991) "English-only" programs are a misnomer. If there is more than one student of the same language group, their language will likely be used in the school setting. The number of Spanish speakers in a school setting affects both the access to student speakers of English and the opportunity for frequent interactions.

This does not mean that Spanish should not be spoken on an American secondary campus. The use of Spanish for social and academic purposes must be encouraged as a linguistic and cultural asset. The importance of validating Spanish as part of students' identity and as an educational resource cannot be underestimated if their eventual bilingualism is to be additive rather than subtractive.

If students are only able to function in Spanish, however, they will be isolated within a campus *barrio*. If their English proficiency does not permit them to succeed academically they greatly increase their chances for internalizing the caste-like mentality of many Mexican Americans.

Both teachers and the school must work together in structuring opportunities for immigrants to communicate with English speakers. The findings of this study show that this does not automatically occur when students of different ethnic groups are placed in classes together. Teachers must structure activities where communication is the goal. This provides linguistic practice for second language students, and encourages positive inter-cultural communication.

The language education of minority students is a politically and emotionally charged issue. Skills in standard English are not enough to remove the prejudicial stigma of "other" that American society assigns to certain groups including African Americans, Mexican Americans, and Native Americans. As suggested by Madrid (1988), the questionable ideal of an "accentless" society will not ensure equality. It would be naïve to assume that any common language could erase decades of prejudice. Ability to function in standard English is, however, an educational tool which increases the possibility of students' access to institutions of social and economic power which themselves must be changed to reflect the needs of our pluralistic society. As powerfully explained by Freire & Macedo (1987), standard English, as a dominant dialect, should never be used as a weapon to maintain the present social order.

The Limits of the Study

The findings of this study reflect the linguistic and educational realities of fourteen co-researchers at Capital High School. Further research is needed in other contexts to develop grounded theory which has broader generalizability.

Recommendations for Future Research

The study referred to but did not specifically address the role of parental and community involvement in students' education which Cummins (1989) identified as major factors in the empowerment of minority students. This parental involvement needs to be studied at the secondary school as well as the elementary school level. Very little qualitative research has been conducted among limited English proficient students at the secondary level even among Mexican immigrants, the largest group in this population. Mexican students' perspectives on second language acquisition in other high schools, both bilingual and English-only, need to be compared to the perspectives of co-researchers in this study. Students from other Latino groups need to be consulted with the specific purpose of determining how their linguistic and cultural needs may differ because of refugee experiences which many of them share. Again, research should be conducted in a variety of educational settings currently available for second language students.

The same process of acknowledging individual students' voices in context must continue with other ethnic groups from the Afghans to the Tongans, from the Vietnamese to the Romanians. Critical mass was identified as an important aspect of Mexican students' linguistic and cultural realities in American schools. It is important to find out if the number of students in other language groups has similar effects on individual students' initiative and success in learning English.

Interactions between different language and ethnic groups on secondary campuses provide almost endless combinations of valuable research options. It is essential to understand the conditions under which any of these interchanges lead to vital practice in understanding and using English, as well as encouraging cognitive growth and inter-cultural communication.

The purpose in understanding immigrant students' linguistic and cultural experiences is to help them acquire English, an obvious roadblock to their educational success. Research needs to continue to value the dialogic process that makes connections between students' personal and classroom realities in order to improve the planning, implementing, and assessing of educational programs.

Glossary of Terms

For the purposes of this study, these terms have been used based on the following definitions.

Anglo: Anyone not identifiable as Hispanic, African American, Asian, or American Indian.

BICS: Basic interpersonal communication skills (Cummins, 1981); the aspects of language proficiency associated with face-to-face interaction about everyday rather than academic topics.

CALP: Cognitive academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1981); the aspects of language proficiency associated with academic achievement and literacy.

Chicano/Chicana: A person born in the U.S. whose parents or ancestors immigrated to the United States from Mexico.

Comprehensible input (CI): Language input (either written or heard) which the learner understands (Krashen, 1982a).

CUP: Common underlying proficiencies of first and second languages (supported by Cummins, 1981).

ESL: English as a second language

FEP: Fluent English proficient: a designation indicating that formerly limited English proficient (LEP) students have passed district-designated tests for English language proficiency and have scored above the 36th percentile on state-designated achievement tests in the areas of math, reading, and language.

FES/LEP : Fluent English speaking, limited English proficient: a designation indicating that students have passed district-mandated tests for English language proficiency but have not scored above the 36th percentile on state-designated achievement tests in the areas of math, reading, and language.

gabacho: Originally a term used for all foreigners, such as the French in Mexico during the 1860s, but now designating all Anglos and African Americans.

Hispanic: A bureaucratic term used in the 1990 census to describe people of both Spanish and Latin American origin regardless of race or current language proficiency.

language minority (LM) students: Students who come from families where a language other than English is spoken, as designated on the Home Language Survey (HLS) which is mandated by the state of California. These students may or may not have acquired full proficiency in English.

Language output: Speech or writing.

Latino/Latina: A person who was born in--or whose ancestors were born in--a Spanish-speaking country in the western hemisphere.

LEP: Limited English proficient: a general designation applied to language minority students who have not passed both district-mandated tests for language proficiency and state-mandated achievement tests above the 36th percentile.

Mexican American: 1) A person born in the U.S. whose parents or ancestors immigrated to the United States from Mexico; 2) A person born in Mexico but who now holds U.S. citizenship.

Mexican-origin students: 1) ESL students who are immigrants from Mexico; 2) Mexican- American students.

NEP: Non-English Proficient

Sheltered content classes: Academic classes for LEP students in which teachers use a variety of techniques to make the content comprehensible and meaningful for the students including simplified speech, hands-on activities, visuals, and structured lessons that make use of students' previous knowledge and experiences. These classes stress English language development (ELD) as well as academc information.

Socio-affective filter: The filter which governs how much input goes through to the language processing mechanism (Krashen, 1981).

SUP: Separate underlying proficiencies of the learner's first and second languages (discounted by Cummins, 1981)

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APPENDIX A

INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO TEACHERS

October 10, 1990

Dear Colleague:

I am currently a doctoral candidate at The Claremont Graduate School where I am doing research for my dissertation on Mexican students who have recently immigrated to the United States as adolescents. I would like to find out how, when, and why they think they learn to communicate in English in a language program such as Capital High's.

I did a pilot study last year at your school which involved interviewing six ESL students. The principal has given me his permission to continue and expand this study. If you are an ESL teacher, I will be talking to you individually about selecting and interviewing a limited number of your students. (I have prepared forms requesting both student and parental permission for these interviews.) My entire sample will consist of twelve students, three from each level of Capital High's ESL program. At your convenience and with your permission, I will interview each student twice within about a two-week period. During that interval I will be "shadowing" these students to observe their linguistic interactions in all of their classes. If you teach a content class with ESL students in it, I hope I will be welcome to join you during these periods.

I look forward to hearing your insights and advice on the best way to proceed with my research. I welcome and invite any ideas you would like to share with me as co-researchers in an area that is of vital importance to our multicultural classrooms. As a former second language teacher at the high school level, I am well aware of the many demands placed on your busy days. Please let me know if there is any reason you would not like your students to participate in this study. I look forward to both interviewing your students and observing them with minimum disruption of your classes.

I value your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Rosalie Giacchino-Baker

APPENDIX B

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

nombre:

____

apellido primero segundo

dirección:__________________________teléfono: ____________

edad: _____ año de graduación: _____ grado:_____

escuela anterior: ____

ciudad y país de nacimiento: _____________________________

fecha de entrada--en este país:_______--en Capital High ___

domicilio de su familia: _________________________________

nombres y edades de sus hermanos __________________________

__________________________ _______________________________

__________________________ _______________________________

empleos--
de su padre:_________ de su madre:________ de Ud._________

actividades en la escuela: _______________________________

clases de inglés que tuvo antes de venir en esta escuela

¿Dónde?:______________________ ¿Cuántas?:_________________

clases que tuvo el año pasado:	clases que tiene este año:
____________________________	______________________
____________________________	______________________
____________________________	______________________
____________________________	______________________
____________________________	______________________

APPENDIX C

LANGUAGE LOG FORM

nombre______________________

DIARIO DEL IDIOMA

Para que no se olvide, por favor, indique cuando y con quien habló inglés cada día. También describa brevemente de que hablaron. Vamos a discutir los detalles de sus experiencias.

APPENDIX D

PARENT AND STUDENT PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

Estimados Padres:

En la universidad de Claremont Graduate School estoy estudiando como mejorar la enseñanza del inglés como segundo idioma. Creo que es muy importante escuchar las ideas que los estudiantes tienen de sus experiencias diarias Por eso, quiero hablar con su hijo/hija ________________________ y preguntarle si piensa que está haciendo progreso en sus estudios de inglés.

Necesito su permiso para hacer entrevistas con él/ella. Voy a escibir un libro describiendo las entrevistas con algunos alumnos de Capital High School. Sus identidades se quederán anónimas.

No es la primera vez que hago este tipo de entrevistas. Los estudiantes siempre me dicen que aprenden mucho de nuestras conversaciones. Su hijo/hija está siempre libre de no continuar las entrevistas conmigo. El director y los profesores de la escuela están de acuerdo con este proyecto.

Por favor, marque la caja abajo y regrese este papél a la escuela tan pronto como lo sea posible. Si tiene alguna pregunta, llámeme a mi casa por teléfono (714) 625-4864.

Muchas gracias por su atención y cooperación.

Sinceramente,

Rosalia Giacchino-Baker

____

Con el permiso de:

Director de Capital High School

/ / Estoy de acuerdo que ________hable con la Sra. Baker.

/ / No estoy de acuerdo.

____________ fecha ____ firma del padre (de la madre) o del tutor

____ firma del alumno (de la alumna)

APPENDIX E

FOLLOW-UP NOTE TO TEACHERS

With your permission I will be visiting your Period _______ class on _______________________________and _______________________________ with ______________________________. If this is not convenient please contact me at home (714-000-0000).

Thank you for your cooperation.

Rosalie Giacchino-Baker

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE PAGE OF A CODED INTERVIEW

CM: Mi primera intención era de estudiar computadoras. En México estudié un poco personal goal: education (computers
mecanografía pero no computadoras. Vine aquí y veo que puedo estudiar educational background
computadoras. No tomé el primer año de computadoras porque no sabía inglés. Uno English proficiency
siempre a veces se basa en lo que dicen sus amigos. Siempre me decían que iba a ser consulting classmates
difícil, que tenía que escribir mucho. Entonces esperé un poco más para poder
entender un poco. Y pienso que yo quiero estudiar computadoras para tener un buen
trabajo y para ayudar un poco a mis padres. Yo sé que ahorita ya mis hermanos, personal goal: help family
gracias a uno, el más grande, su intención de traernos a todos a una vida mejor-- family value better life
Pues, siento que todos piensan así. Y yo le agradezco mucho a él que nos trajo y que
desde que me vine me metió en la escuela para estudiar inglés para que supiera. family value: education + Engl.
Porque hay veces que unos entran y los meten a trabajar aunque están chicos. Pero
es más difícil para los primeros como él. Siempre quiso ser doctor--como veterinario. family values and ambitions

Researcher: Oh.

CM: Pero no pudo porque no tenemos tanto dinero. No más él estudió la preparatoria y tuvo sus papeles. Pero como no tenía mi papá tanto dinero fue mejor que se vino por acá. Y como yo y mis hermanos ya tuvimos la oportunidad de hacer un poco de--de progresar un poco. No más un hermano mío no quiso. Y mi otro hermano estudió high school y aprendió un poco de inglés. De allí entró a trabajar en un McDonald's. Después en su mismo trabajo le dieron oportunidad de progresar y le pusieron en un puesto más alto que trabajador. Allí empezó a estudiar y así siguió hasta que ha ido subiendo de puesto.

Researcher: Sí, sí.

CM: ...Es mi hermano que siempre nos está diciendo que es necesario estudiar en la family value: education
escuela para no ser tan burro...

Researcher: Mm hmm.

CM: Y yo quiero estudiar computadoras. Espero que--Tengo que estudiar un poco más. personal goal education (computers)
Yo sé que todavía no hablo bien porque me da tanta vergüenza...(CM, I1, 3-4) problems speaking English: embarrassment